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NEWS CLIPPINGS

10 September 2018

Monday



Honor. Patriotism. Duty

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Rody cites presidential prerogative on amnesty

By EDITH REGALADO

DAVAO CITY – It's the "president's prerogative" to void the amnesty granted to Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV while maintaining the amnesty granted to other military personnel, according to President Duterte.

Arriving at the Davao International Airport last Saturday, Duterte said he had no problem with Trillanes' fellow mutineers and coup plotters and they were all his friends, so he did not want them jailed:

"Wala man akong problema sa ibang nag-coup d'état, puro kaibigan ko man 'yan. So sabi ko, bakit ko sila ipakulong?"

Duterte said the amnesty given to Trillanes by former president Benigno Aquino III is flawed, but stopped short of saying that the other officers, who were granted amnesty together with Trillanes, have nothing to worry about.

There were several other military officers who took part in the 2003 and 2007 mutinies, which sought the removal of then president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Trillanes, one of

Duterte's harshest critics, was a Navy lieutenant at the time.

Duterte pointed out that he issued Proclamation 572, which revokes Trillanes' amnesty, on the basis that the former rebel did not apply for amnesty or admitted guilt for his involvement in the Oakwood mutiny and Manila Peninsula siege, apart from a Marine standoff in 2006 at Fort Bonifacio involving other renegade soldiers who also called for Arroyo's removal.

Aside from Trillanes, Aquino also granted amnesty in 2011 to former Bureau of Customs chief Nicanor Faeldon; party-list Rep. Gary Alejandro; retired major general Renato Miranda; retired colonels Rafael Galvez, Allan Paje, Jaime Regalario and Jake Malajacan, as well as civilian

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Rody From Page 1

Pepe Araneta Albert.

Duterte denied he was targeting Trillanes as he pointed out that Solicitor General Jose Calida saw some flaws in the granted amnesty. He did not say though whether he ordered Calida to review the amnesty or if Calida acted on his own.

Asked to comment on why only Trillanes, he replied that he was using a presidential prerogative in issuing Proclamation 572.

"(My answer to him) is it's the President's prerogative. You read the Philippine Constitution—The President shall have the power to pardon and grant amnesty with the concurrence –

with the agreement of Congress.' That's it," Duterte added.

He also quoted the golden rule to justify his action.

"(Now), what is the lesson there? *Bakit tinarget ko siya?* (Why have I targeted him?) Well, I only have one word. *Pareho man tayo na nagta-trabaho lang rin* (We are both workers). I will just quote, correct me if I'm wrong, 'Do not do unto others, what you would not want – want them to do to you'," the President said.

He also said that the revocation of the amnesty granted to Trillanes is not part of a bigger effort to silence his critics like Vice President Leni Robredo, Sen. Leila de Lima and former chief justice Maria Lourdes Sereno.

Incidentally, it was also Calida

who reviewed Sereno's compliance with requirements for appointment to a position at the Supreme Court, particularly targeting a flaw in the submission of statements of assets and liabilities.

Duterte also lambasted Robredo anew, saying she would never be president.

"*Gaya ni* (Just like) Leni, she can never be a president. *Puro dasal. T*** i***. *Kasi kung pinakingan lang ako ng Diyos nila, 'yung Diyos ng Katoliko? Ay p***** i***, walang nangyari sa buhay ko. (It's all prayers. So*of*****h. If their God just heard me, the God of Catholics? So*of*****h, nothing would have happened to my life.) My God is my God. It is the God that my parents revered," the President added.

NO GUSTER MOVE, SAY TRILLANES, 'PLOTTERS'

STORY BY JULIE M. AURELIO AND MARLON RAMOS

The opposition senator says President Duterte is paranoid. According to the Liberal Party, it doesn't have to do anything to discredit the administration because it's already doing a good job of discrediting itself.

**By Julie M. Aurelio
and Marlon Ramos**
@Team_Inquirer

President Duterte's critics on Sunday scoffed at his claim of a plot to overthrow him by October, calling him "paranoid" and "crazy."

Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, holed up in the Senate building since Tuesday after Mr. Duterte voided the amnesty given to him as a military mutineer in 2011, had a few but sharp words about the President's claim: "It's all in his mind. He's already paranoid."

Magdalo Rep. Gary Alejano, who visited Trillanes in his Senate office on Sunday morning, agreed, saying Mr. Duterte had gone "praning," or crazy.

Ifugao Rep. Teddy Baguilat, one of the few remaining members of the Liberal Party (LP) in the House of Representatives, said Mr. Duterte might have been thinking of Oktoberfest, the monthlong beer festival in Germany, not "Red October," a reference to the 1917 communist uprising in Russia.

"We in the Liberal Party will never plan to oust the President because we respect the Constitution," Baguilat said in a text message.

Trillanes, LP and Reds

Mr. Duterte spoke about the alleged plot to overthrow his administration in a speech at the Davao international airport on Saturday after arriving from official visits to Israel and Jordan.

He claimed that the "yellows" (a reference to the LP), Trillanes and communist insurgents were colluding to bring him down from power by October.

Mr. Duterte gave no details but, addressing the military, he said he had received an intelligence report from "sources from a foreign power" detailing the plot.

"It's Trillanes, the yellows and the [Communist Party of the Philippines, or CPP] Politburo. The problem with Trillanes, he is also playing with the communists," he said.

Trillanes denied Mr. Duterte's allegation, saying he was instrumental in the passage of laws that benefited soldiers.

"If I can only make a list,

we'll probably have to stay here the whole day. The soldiers know that," he said.

If anybody has collaborated with the communists, it's Mr. Duterte, he added, referring to Mr. Duterte's helping the insurgents when he was mayor of Davao City and then appointing leftists to his Cabinet after being elected President in 2016 on the recommendation of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines.

Division in military

The CPP had no comment on Mr. Duterte's claim on Sunday, but it compared the President to the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos for ordering the arrest of his fiercest critic, Trillanes.

In a statement on its website, the CPP also said Mr. Duterte was only fomenting "further division and dissent" among key military and police officials in ordering Trillanes' arrest.

"He abused his power and trampled on the legal processes of his own government," it said.

Sen. Francis Pangilinan, president of the LP, said the opposition did not have to do anything to destabilize the Duterte administration since the administration was already destabilizing itself.

"On its own, either by its incompetence or corruption, the government is doing a good job of destabilizing itself," Pangilinan said.

The LP chief said the accusations of destabilization being hurled at the opposition were downright false because dissent was not the same as destabilization.

Military loyalty check

Alejano said the opposition had no desire to remove Mr. Duterte from office through illegal means.

Instead of making such claims, Mr. Duterte should deal with the country's immediate problems, the lawmaker said.

"If you are confident with your governance, if you are confident with the military, the police and democracy, you won't be removed. Just do your job," he added.

Alejano said the real ally of the communist rebels was Mr. Duterte, who had been vocal in his support for the insurgents during his days as mayor of Davao City.

"That's his ouster plot. And

at one time, he said the Central intelligence Agency wanted to remove him. So the communists and the CIA are conniving to remove him?" he said.

In a radio interview, the lawmaker said Mr. Duterte was conducting a loyalty check among military officials after voiding Trillanes' amnesty.

"He's actually doing a loyalty check right now," Alejano said. "If he's doing a loyalty check, then it means he's trying to get their personal loyalty to him. It's as if he's saying that, 'You should be loyal to me because I doubled your salary.'"

In his arrival speech on Saturday, Mr. Duterte told the military and the police that he expected them to be loyal to him.

Calida did 'sloppy work'

Alejano also lambasted Solicitor General Jose Calida for bypassing the military hierarchy and Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana when he looked into the records of Trillanes' amnesty grant.

He said Calida, whom the President identified as the one who initiated the review of Trillanes' amnesty, did a "sloppy work" when he asked for a certification from the division chief of the military records office instead of coordinating with senior military officials.

Alejano said Calida did not seek clearance from Lorenzana regarding the senator's military records.

"They used government instruments in mounting a personal revenge against a critic of President Duterte," he said.

Mr. Duterte should apologize for wrongfully voiding Trillanes' amnesty, he said. "The Duterte administration must admit that they are at fault."

Alejano also defended former Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin, whom Mr. Duterte accused of usurping presidential powers by granting amnesty to Trillanes in 2011.

"He was not the one who granted the amnesty, he was the one who processed the applications and approved the applications," the lawmaker said.

"He just informed the President, because in Proclamation No. 75, he was tasked. He just apprised the President," he said.

Former President Benigno Aquino III said last week that it was he who approved the grant of amnesty to Trillanes. INQ

NAVAL WAR

CHINA JOINS LARGEST AUSTRALIA'S MARITIME GAMES

EXERCISE WITH 27 INDO-PACIFIC NATIONS

SYDNEY—China is participating for the first time in Australia's largest maritime exercise as more than 3,000 personnel from 27 countries engage in joint training off the northern port of Darwin.

Exercise Kakadu is hosting 23 ships and submarines from across the Indo-Pacific region, enabling them to establish familiarity which helps to prevent conflict on the high seas and to coordinate disaster relief efforts.

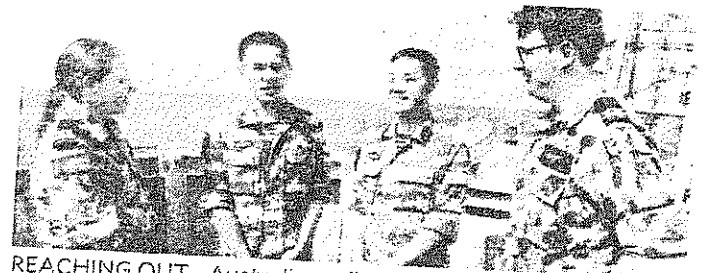
Commander Anita Sellick of the Australian frigate HMAS Newcastle said two Royal Australian Navy sailors were accepted onto China's naval

frigate Huangshan during the drill.

"Two of our Australian Navy sailors are across actually right now in the Chinese ship. So they've both been able to integrate within each other's Navy and learn a little bit of what life is like for them today in Exercise Kakadu," Sellick told Reuters on Saturday.

Mutual benefits

The commander of the Australian Fleet, Rear Admiral Jonathan Mead, told reporters in a televised interview that there were mutual benefits in building understanding and



REACHING OUT Australian sailors chat with Chinese naval officers aboard the Australian frigate HMAS Newcastle during Exercise Kakadu off Darwin. —REUTERS

trust during the exercise.

The joint military practice, which will continue until Sept. 15, is supported by the Royal Australian Air Force and in-

volves 21 aircraft.

Darwin, on the doorstep of Asia, is Australia's most strategically important city and has been home to a contingent of US

Marines since 2011, making it the logical place for the exercise.

Working relationships

Integrating the People's Liberation Army Navy into the biennial training with American, Australian, New Zealand and Canadian forces for the first time has given China an opportunity to improve its working relationship with those countries.

In April, three Australian warships challenged an encounter with China as they passed through the South China Sea.

Then in May, the United States disinvented China from

joint naval exercises off Hawaii in response to what it called China's militarization of disputed areas of the South China Sea, an allegation Beijing rejects.

Participants

The participating countries in Exercise Kakadu are China, Japan, South Korea, Thailand, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Cook Islands, Fiji, France, India, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, East Timor, Tonga, United Arab Emirates, United States, Australia and Vietnam. —REUTERS

China engages in Australia's largest maritime drill for first time

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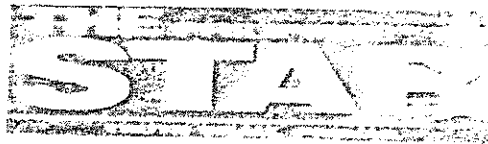
Commander of the Australian Fleet, Rear Admiral Jonathan Mead, told reporters in Darwin in a televised interview on Friday that there were mutual benefits in building understanding and trust during the exercise.

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Integrating the People's Liberation Army Navy into the biennial training with American, Australian, New Zealand and Canadian forces for the first time has given China an opportunity to improve its working relationship with those countries, which has been tense at times.

In April, three Australian warships had a challenging encounter with China as they passed through the South China Sea. Then in May, the United States disinvited China from joint naval exercises off Hawaii in response to what it called China's militarization of disputed areas of the South China Sea, an allegation Beijing rejects. *Q*



'Inflation self-inflicted, not caused by Trump'

By PAOLO ROMERO

US President Donald Trump and other global factors should not be blamed for the Philippines' accelerating inflation, which is largely triggered by the Duterte administration's policies, Senate President Pro Tempore Ralph Recto said yesterday.

Recto made the statement after President Duterte twice in two days blamed Trump's tariff policies and the raising of interest rates in the US for the country's

inflation that took off in February and continues to rise.

"World events, external factors are a given. That's always the case. We must anticipate. In any situation there are both opportunities and threats. A big part of our inflation problem is self-inflicted. They are internal," Recto said in a text message.

He said the continued depreciation of the peso is also a major factor in the increase of prices of commodities.

Recto, who served as head of the

National Economic and Development Authority during the Arroyo administration, said the Duterte government can no longer afford to continue intervening in the agriculture sector, particularly subsidizing rice and other crop production.

He suggested various policy measures to slow down inflation and restore confidence in the economy, including incentivizing private sector investment and credit to agriculture to increase productivity; speeding up the granting

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Inflation From Page 1

of land titles to farmers while allowing land consolidation; reducing tariffs on agricultural

products, and pushing private sector investment in technology and mechanization in the sector.

He also said the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas can improve its management of both interest rates and the exchange rate.

He also advised the Department of Finance to ask

Congress to temporarily suspend the second package of the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN 2).

"It's (TRAIN 2) bad timing. The looming trade war and conflicts around the world will affect the global economy. I suggest our economic managers anticipate both threats and

opportunities," Recto said.

He warned TRAIN 2 could further increase prices of goods, increase costs for business, and "will not attract investments at this time."

Sen. Francis Pangilinan, president of the Liberal Party, hit Duterte for blaming Trump for the country's rising inflation.

He said Duterte's argument could hold water if other countries in Southeast Asia have also registered rise in prices.

"That (argument) could have been good if other countries in the Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) also have high inflation. We have the highest (inflation) and by a wide margin," Pangilinan told *dzMM*.

He said it was the poor policies and neglect by the Duterte administration of the economy that led to the situation.

Cabinet meeting on inflation

Duterte will tackle inflation and rice supply during the regular Cabinet meeting at Malacañang today.

Duterte has reiterated that the 6.4 percent inflation in the Philippines, the highest level in nine years, is brought by the policies of US imposing higher tariffs on goods.

The President also stressed that no administration had not experience a rise in inflation rate. He cited Philippine Statistics Authority's data showing that inflation reached 41 percent in 1974 and was at its highest at 50.3 percent in 1984.

The President earlier warned he would raid warehouses of traders reportedly hoarding rice supply.

Duterte said he would call on the military and the police to pounce on the warehouses if rice supply would continue to be scarce.

- With Edith Regalado

BOMB 'DISRUPTOR' SAVES LIVES

HOW, BUAMER SA MGA BOMBERS!



By Benar Canales
and abala@ink.com

After seeing soldiers lose their limbs from detonating carabombas, a young military officer did the next best thing: a simple "disruptor" out of small tinning caps and water canister.

The revolutionary device has been saving the lives not only of Army officers and men, but also civilians in conflict areas.

BOMB 'DISRUPTOR' INVENTED BY ARMY AWARDEE SAVES LIVES



Lt. Col. Francis Señoron

FROM A1

"If I was able to design and develop devices for use of the AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) considering the limited resources that I had at the time, I am certain that there are equally capable Filipinos working in the public and private sectors that could work together given the appropriate support and proper management for the same purpose," Lt. Col. Francis Señoron said at Friday's awarding of Metrobank Foundation Outstanding Filipinos.

For his invention and other accomplishments, the 40-year-old Army lieutenant colonel was

among the 10 recipients of the annual award that recognizes Filipinos who "render service above and beyond their call of duty."

The other awardees were two soldiers, three policemen and four teachers, who each received P1 million cash, a trophy and a gold medallion.

Ultimate sacrifice

In 2006 when he was assigned to the Army's bomb disposal unit, Señoron saw firsthand how many soldiers paid the ultimate sacrifice of trying to defuse enemy bombs with inadequate equipment.

And with his background in mechanical engineering, he designed and assembled an improvised explosive device (IED) dis-

ruptor using readily available and locally sourced materials.

In no time, his invention became widely used and known in the field.

It was even featured in the 2010 report of *The Economist* magazine, which wrote: "[Señoron], an Army captain, has built IED disruptor out of small blasting caps and a water canister the size of a beer can. When positioned close to a device and detonated remotely with a wire, the canister squirts water into the circuitry of the device to short it out.

Cheaper design

An IED disruptor can cost around P850,000 each overseas. But using Señoron's design, such a

device can be assembled for P600.

Speaking on behalf of the Metrobank awardees, the Army officer believed in the potential of Filipinos to conduct research and to develop modern technologies for the use of their countrymen.

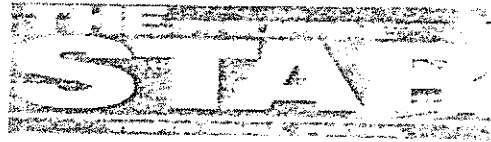
The country, he added, can only attain development if it is "guided with a deep sense of nationalism."

He noted how the Philippines, "despite being independent is still militarily dependent on foreign countries."

Other countries had taken interest in his invention but Señoron chose the Philippine Army to adopt it—along with an electric blasting galvanometer he also designed—for funding and mass local production.

To this day, the two devices are being used by various explosives and ordnance units nationwide, saving not just soldiers but also civilians living in conflict zones.

The other Metrobank awardees were Air Force Lt. Col. Thomas Ryan Seguin and Navy Lt. Col. Danilo Facundo; SPO₁ Aida Awitin, Senior Insp. Dennis Ebsolo and Senior Supt. Pascual G. Muñoz Jr.; and teachers Mary Jane Ramo of Tonggo Elementary School, Misamis Occidental, Alma Janagap of Pavia National High School, Iloilo, Aimee Marie Gragasin of Philippine Science High School-Cagayan Valley campus, and Carla Dimalanta of the University of the Philippines Diliman. INO



AFP chief to troops: Obey chain of command

By MICHAEL PUNONGBAYAN

Amid reports of restiveness and discontent in the military, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief Gen. Carlito Galvez yesterday ordered troops to toe the line and

follow the chain of command.

Galvez also reminded the military to follow its constitutional mandate and not take part in any political activity.

"Our loyalty is to the Constitution. I command the

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AFP From Page 1

troops to adhere to the rule of law and always obey the chain of command. Violation of these instructions will be dealt with severely and personnel who will get involved will be immediately relieved from their posts and investigated," Galvez declared.

Galvez also issued the warning against groups or personalities that he said were trying to sow intrigue and discord in the uniformed service.

"Let me belie claims by some quarters of divisiveness or rumblings in the AFP. I assure our people that, as in many times in the past, the AFP will be united and strong as an organization," Galvez said.

he said.

Galvez made the statement as the Supreme Court is set to tackle the petition of Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV questioning the validity of President Duterte's proclamation ordering his arrest on a flawed amnesty grant.

Duterte also ordered the Department of Justice and the military to pursue criminal and administrative complaints

"Let me then, as the AFP chief of staff, take this occasion to warn persons or groups that attempt to divide the AFP by sowing intrigues and discord among its officers and enlisted personnel. You will not succeed," he added.

While aware that troops have individual views on many issues, Galvez said these merely reflect how intelligent and mature the members of the AFP are.

"But we always put the interest of the organization and the nation above our own,"

against the former rebel military officer.

Trillanes told the police and military not to follow Duterte's "illegal order" for him to be arrested without a court warrant, saying his rebellion and coup cases were dismissed in 2011 after he accepted an amnesty offered by then president Benigno Aquino III.

Addressing military and police officers who may be pressured to enforce Duterte's order out of fear, Trillanes urged them not to "do anything illegal or unconstitutional."

Trillanes said he has reached out to his contacts within the AFP and he was given their guarantee that they would respect the agreement they had with the Senate leadership not to arrest him while inside the legislative chamber.

Galvez has commissioned a gener-

al court-martial to try Trillanes. He noted the former Navy officer has filed a petition before the Supreme Court questioning Duterte's order so the court-martial was held in abeyance.

Galvez said the AFP will obey the order of the SC, which is why the military "will not anymore comment on its merits as we hope other parties would follow suit."

Trillanes has filed a petition for prohibition and certiorari, seeking a TRO to stop the AFP

and the Philippine National Police (PNP) from arresting

him under Proclamation 572.

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Trillanes also asked the SC to declare as null and void the proclamation for alleged violation of the Constitution.

Sen. Gregorio Honasan, a former rebel military officer, also reminded the AFP to follow what he called "legal chain of command."

"Uphold the rule of law and due process, obey the legally prescribed chain of command, allow the legal courts, not the media, to decide and rule on matters of law, implement policy and enforce the law and not interpret it," Honasan said.

Moot and impossible

A veteran lawyer said the general court-martial cannot revive the case against Trillanes involving alleged violation of the Articles of War.

"The penalty for such an offense is merely dismissal from service which was rendered moot or impossible to implement since Trillanes is already out of the military service since 2007 when he was elected senator and up to the present," Romulo Macalintal said.

Even if the case against Trillanes could be reopened by the court-martial it is still dismissible since the case involves an incident that happened 15 years ago, he said.

Macalintal said the Trillanes case will certainly qualify in the list of cases dismissed by the SC for "inordinate delay in the proceedings" that violates Article III, Section 16 of the Constitution, which states "all persons shall have the right to a speedy disposition of their cases before all judicial, quasi-judicial or administrative bodies." - With Paolo Romero, Helen Flores

MILITARY AWAITS SUPREME COURT RULING ON SENATOR'S PETITION

COURT-MARTIAL PROCEEDINGS VS TRILLANES PUT ON HOLD, SAYS AFP CHIEF OF STAFF



Carlito Galvez Jr.

By Jeannette I. Andrade
@jiandradeINQ

The Armed Forces of the Philippines has deferred court-martial proceedings against Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV to wait for the Supreme Court decision on his petition for the invalidation of President Duterte's order voiding the amnesty given to him as a military rebel in 2011.

In a statement on Sunday, Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr. said: "The AFP submits to the majesty of the Supreme Court and yields to its wisdom as it tackles the petition pertaining to Presidential

Proclamation No. 572 filed by Senator Trillanes."

Galvez declined to comment on Trillanes' petition.

"We hope other parties [will] follow," said the AFP chief of staff.

Wait for court decision

"With the recent pronouncement of the Chief Executive, general court-martial proceedings will be held in abeyance until the Supreme Court has ruled on the legality of Presidential Proclamation 572," he added.

President Duterte has stepped back from the confrontation with his archcritic to give way to the

legal process, ordering the military and the Philippine National Police not to arrest Trillanes without a court-issued warrant.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) has applied for a warrant with the Makati Regional Trial Court (RTC) Branch 148, which has set a hearing for Sept. 13.

The DOJ has also asked the Makati RTC Branch 150 to reopen Trillanes' rebellion case, but the court has not responded pending a look at the case.

Both courts dismissed the charges against Trillanes in 2011 after he was granted amnesty.

The head of the Department

of National Defense temporary committee that processed the applications for amnesty of Trillanes and other participants in the 2003 Oakwood mutiny, the 2006 Marines standoff, and the 2007 Manila Peninsula siege maintained on Sunday that Trillanes applied for amnesty, contrary to the government's claim that he did not.

'I did my job'

In a message to reporters, former Defense Undersecretary Honorio Azcueta said, "I can honestly say that as chair of the ad hoc committee on amnesty, I

conscientiously did my job in accordance with Proclamation No. 75 and its rules."

Azcueta was referring to former President Benigno Aquino III's 2010 offer of amnesty to participants in military uprisings against his predecessor, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

The amnesty committee was tasked with receiving and processing applications for amnesty for the subsequent approval of the defense secretary.

Azcueta said Trillanes "obviously" applied for amnesty. "That's why on record he was granted amnesty." INQ A2

AFP WARNS GROUPS VS ATTEMPTS TO DIVIDE MILITARY, DENIES RESTIVENESS



Carlito Galvez Jr.

By Jeannette I. Andrade
@jiandradeINQ

Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Carlito Galvez Jr. denied on Sunday that there was restiveness within the military ranks, warning persons and groups against attempts to divide the organization.

Galvez issued a statement on Sunday amid claims by Com-

munist Party of the Philippines founder Jose Maria Sison that a faction of the AFP was just "waiting for the moment when the mass protests reach a certain scale and level of intensity" to act.

'AFP will be united'

"Let me belie claims by some quarters of divisiveness or rumblings in the AFP. I assure our people that, as in many times in

the past, the AFP will be united and strong as an organization," Galvez said.

In cautioning people and groups sowing intrigue and discord to try to divide the AFP, he stressed, "You will not succeed."

Even then the AFP chief of staff reminded all military personnel "not to meddle or take part in partisan politics. Our loyalty is to the Constitution."

Galvez ordered all troops to adhere to the rule of law and always obey the chain of command, warning "Violation of these instructions will be dealt with severely and personnel who will get involved will be immediately relieved from their posts and investigated."

Personal views

He conceded that AFP personnel might have personal

views on issues, which he said was a sign of "an intelligent and mature organization," but assured that the AFP would "always put the interest of the organization and the nation above our own."

For his part, AFP public affairs office chief, Col. Noel Detoyato, described as "very remote" any occurrence that military personnel would move to oust the sitting President. INQ

15

You will fail, Galvez warns military splittists

THE chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines on Sunday warned groups attempting to split the military organization that they would fail because the AFP is bigger than its officers and men.

"While I am aware that the troops have individual views on many is-

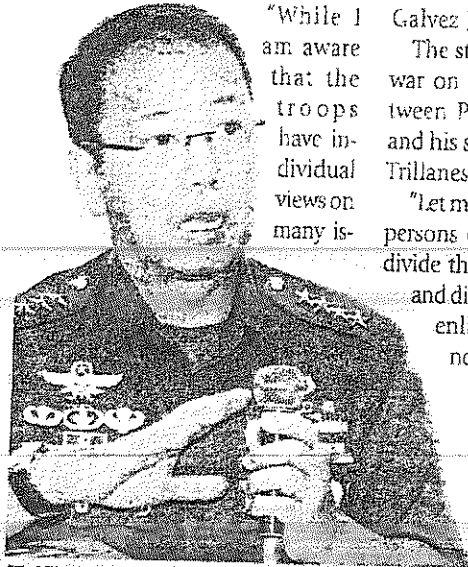
ues, those merely are hallmarks of an intelligent and mature organization like the AFP.

But we always put the interest of the organization and the nation above our own," Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr. said in a statement.

The statement came over a word war on the loyalty of soldiers between President Rodrigo Duterte and his staunch critic Sen. Antonio Trillanes 4th.

"Let me take this occasion to warn persons or groups that attempt to divide the AFP by sowing intrigues and discord among its officers and enlisted personnel. You will not succeed," Galvez said.

He reminded soldiers to stay away from politics after Duterte issued Proclamation 572 revoking Trillanes' amnesty granted by



AFP chief of staff Carlito Galvez.

➤ Fail 13

■ FAIL FROM A1

You will fail, Galvez warns military splittists

then-President Benigno Aquino 3rd in 2011.

Duterte earlier said there was a plot to oust him by Trillanes, the Liberal Party and the communists.

Galvez said he has commissioned the general court martial (GCM) to resume hearings on the case of Trillanes, a former Philippine Navy lieutenant senior grade.

However, he said proceedings

of the GCM shall be shelved pending Trillanes' petition before the Supreme Court (SC) to determine the legality of Proclamation 572 issued by Duterte last week.

"In deference to the SC that has taken cognizance of the case, we will not anymore comment on its merits as we hope other parties would follow suit," the AFP chief said.

Proper procedures

A former Defense official also on Sunday said Trillanes's amnesty application and those of his fellow former mutineers went through proper procedures.

Honorio Azcueta, former Defense undersecretary and chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee that granted Trillanes' amnesty application, added that the approval of the application was in accordance with Proclamation 75 issued by Aquino.

"I can honestly say that as chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on amnesty, I conscientiously did my job in accordance with Proclamation 75 and its rules," Azcueta told reporters.

He said Trillanes, along with his comrades from the Magdalo group, admitted guilt over the Oakwood mutiny in 2003, the Marine standoff in 2006 and the Manila Peninsula siege in 2007, which were all attempts to have then-President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo ousted via coup d'etat.

Apart from Trillanes, former Marine captain and now congressman Gary Alejandro was also granted amnesty, as well as 22 other military officers and personnel.

According to Azcueta, Trillanes and the other amnesty grantees' narrations on the military uprisings "maybe different" when they applied for reprieve in 2011.

Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin

granted the application of Trillanes.

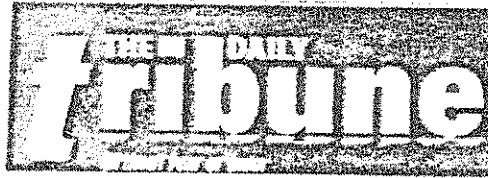
National Security Adviser Hermonogenes Esperon Jr. said Aquino should have issued a "specific amnesty" to Trillanes.

Esperon was the Armed Forces chief when the Manila Peninsula siege transpired in 2007.

"[Trillanes] was not given amnesty by President Aquino. It was SND [Secretary of National Defense] Gazmin who issued the amnesty. [Aquino] simply issued a general amnesty via [Proclamation] 75," he told *The Manila Times*.

Esperon said the military can have jurisdiction over Trillanes if he will be tried by the court martial and if his amnesty is revoked.

DEMPSEY REYES

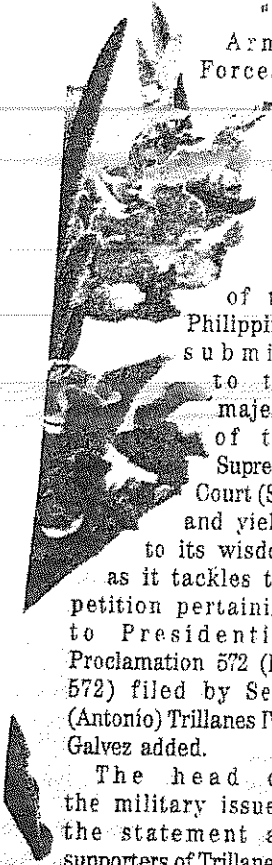


No rumbling inside AFP

Galvez had commissioned the General Court Martial

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is solidly united behind the government of President Rodrigo Duterte and claims of divisiveness or rumbling are not true, AFP chief of staff Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr said in a statement.

"The Armed Forces



of the Philippines submits to the majesty of the Supreme Court (SC) and yields to its wisdom as it tackles the petition pertaining to Presidential Proclamation 572 (PP 572) filed by Sen. (Antonio) Trillanes IV," Galvez added.

The head of the military issued the statement as supporters of Trillanes, including minority senators under the opposition Liberal

Party (LP), remained in the Senate premises almost one week after President Duterte voided the amnesty granted to him by former President Aquino.

Despite his bravado and continuing tirades against Mr. Duterte, Trillanes has kept himself up inside the Senate building since Tuesday to avoid being arrested.

Even after the President already stated that there will be no warrantless arrest against him, Trillanes continued to take refuge at the Senate where he has been taken into custody as a matter of policy and to protect the dignity of the institution.

"In deference to the SC that has taken cognizance of the case, we (military) will not anymore comment on its merits as we hope other parties would follow suit," Galvez said.

Court martial to wait Galvez indicated he had commissioned the General Court Martial (GCM) "that shall continue hearing the

Turn to page 2

No rumbling inside AFP

I command the troops to adhere to the rule of law and always obey the Chain of Command

From page 1

case of the erstwhile Navy Lieutenant Trillanes IV."

"With the recent pronouncement of the Chief Executive, however, GCM proceedings will be held in abeyance until the SC has ruled on the legality of PP 572," Galvez said.

Galvez added as in many times in the past, "the AFP will be united and strong as an organization."

He likewise warned persons or groups against attempts to divide the AFP "by sowing intrigues and discord among its officers and enlisted personnel." "You will not succeed," he said.

Galvez also reminded "every soldier, airman, sailor and marine not to meddle or take part in partisan politics."

"Our loyalty is to the Constitution. I command the troops to adhere to the rule of law and always obey the Chain of Command. Violation of these instructions will be dealt with severely and personnel who will get involved will be immediately relieved of their posts and investigated," he warned.

Galvez said while the troops have individual views on many issues, "we always put the interest of the organization and the nation above our own."

AFP Public Affairs Office chief Col. Noel Detoyato said a court martial can order the arrest of Trillanes.

The military court can take custody of a relieved soldier if and when a supervening event, such as the grant of amnesty, is lifted, Detoyato said.

Detoyato added all

persons under sentence adjudged by court martial will remain under the jurisdiction of the latter until the case was either dismissed, acquitted, convicted, sentenced or halted by a supervening event.

LP's frustration builds

The LP, through its president Sen. Francis Pangilinan, continued to call on supporters to closely monitor the situation at the Senate.

"Please be on standby and wait for further instructions from the groups assigned per day until

a fake military crusader by presenting laws he filed for the benefit of the uniformed services, particularly the AFP.

Trillanes claimed credits for Joint Resolution 5 which increased the Subsistence Allowance of Uniformed Personnel from P90 to P150; the New AFP Modernization Act; the Salary Standardization Law 3, which drastically increased the salaries of the uniformed personnel and pensions of the retirees and RA 10649 which increased the Burial Assistance



Street food booms Street stalls have sprouted on the streets as more people look for economical ways to get on with daily life. BOB DUNGC JR.

13 September," Pangilinan said in an advisory thanking those who have gone to the Senate last Friday and stayed up to Saturday.

"Let us all remain vigilant," he added. Pangilinan earlier had called for the public to converge at the Senate which was a plea that was mostly ignored.

Free snacks

LP also held the so-called Café Liberal just outside the Senate premises that distributed free snacks to those in the premises after the holding of a Mass.

Another opposition group Akbayan said with the revocation of the amnesty of Trillanes, Sen. Risa Hontiveros and Catholic Church leaders are encouraging Filipinos to come together and stand against the President's abuse of power.

for Veterans from P10,000 to P20,000.

In addition to these, Trillanes claimed he also introduced 18 AFP-related bills which are still pending in the committee.

Mario J. Mallari

"The public is asked to express condemnation against Duterte's disregard for the rule of law and callousness towards the economic plight of Filipinos," Akbayan said in an advisory.

Yesterday, Trillanes issued a statement debunking the President's claim he is

'Gov't destabilizing itself'

Soldiers warned against engaging in partisan politics

BY JP LOPEZ AND VICTOR REYES

THE opposition yesterday dismissed President Duterte's statement that some groups are plotting to oust him next month while Armed Forces chief Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr. warned soldiers against engaging in partisan politics amid the supposed destabilization efforts.

"On its own, either by its incompetence or corruption, the government is doing a good job of destabilizing itself," said Sen. Francis Pangilinan, president of the Liberal Party.

"All Malacañang has to do is listen to its own allies who, like the opposition, are calling for the resignation of DA (Department of Agriculture) and NFA (National Food Authority) officials for causing the rice crisis. Are they desta-

bilizers too?" he added.

Vice President Leni Robredo, LP chairwoman, said the party has not formed an alliance or is negotiating to form one with the Communist Party of the Philippines, contrary to Duterte's claim.

Rep. Gary Alejano, who was with Trillanes in the 2003 Oakwood mutiny, said the government should leave the military out of politics.

"Our military should not be dragged into politics. It is a serious mistake on the part of the President to try and use the military as a tool for his political ends," Alejano said in a radio interview.

Galvez said soldiers who "meddle or take part in partisan politics" would be relieved from their posts and investigated.

"Our loyalty is to the Constitution. I command the troops to adhere to the

rule of law and always obey the chain of command," said Galvez.

Duterte, in a speech Saturday after arriving from Jordan, accused the LP led by former President Benigno Aquino, opposition Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, and the Communist Party of the Philippines of plotting to depose him.

Duterte on August 31 signed a proclamation nullifying the amnesty granted by the Aquino administration to Trillanes, a former Navy lieutenant involved in coup moves against Aquino's predecessor, President now Speaker Gloria Arroyo.

Trillanes last week questioned before the Supreme Court the validity of Duterte's Proclamation 572 which ordered his arrest and said he did not meet basic requirements for the grant of amnesty, which are filing an application

for it and admission of crimes in connection with the 2005 Oakwood mutiny and the 2007 Manila Peninsula "siege."

Trillanes, while refuting government's claims, said some military officers have informed him of their sentiments against government.

Galvez belied claims of some quarters that there is divisiveness in the Armed Forces or rumblings, saying the military "will be united and strong as an organization."

He said persons or groups that will attempt to divide the military by sowing intrigues and discord "will not succeed."

Col. Noel Detoyato, chief of the AFP public affairs office, said the military has not received any information about plots

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SOLDIERS

to destabilize government.

He also said there is no need for a loyalty check on soldiers.

"We never do loyalty check because we are sure of (the loyalty) our troops," he said.

Detoyato said any military adventurism against government "is already a remote thing."

"The Armed Forces has a lot of experience about that and this will not result in anything good. Many of them were discharged from the service," he said, referring to soldiers who took part in incidents of adventurism.

'DISSENT IS NOT DESTAB'

Pangilinan said the accusation of destabilization is "downright false."

"It is ridiculous. Dissent is not destabilization. Every time scandals and controversies hound this

administration, whether it be corruption issues or issues of incompetent governance, it blames the opposition," he said, adding the nullification of Trillanes' amnesty was meant to divert the public's attention from crises besetting the administration.

Pangilinan said that instead of throwing baseless accusations against the LP and the rest of the opposition, "the government should listen to the cry of the people and focus on rising prices of goods and lack of jobs that would sufficiently provide for the average Filipino family."

Pangilinan noted that some of the President's allies, namely, Budget Secretary Benjamin Diokno, Representatives Joey Salceda and Karlo Nograles, Sen. Cynthia Villar, and House leader Danny Suarez have called for the sacking of food officials over their alleged incompetence.

"If the President doesn't want

to listen to the opposition, that's fine but his own allies are sounding the alarm bells. Malacañang should heed the clamor of its own allies and act decisively to solve the rice crisis," he said.

'DANGEROUS PRECEDENT'

Alejano said a fragmented and politicized military would adversely affect the nation's stability.

He also said if the amnesty granted to Trillanes is voided, it could set off a chain reaction and put in question the amnesty granted to him and other former soldiers who participated in the Oakwood mutiny.

"These moves will have far-reaching implications even to the Armed Forces that is being compelled to enforce the illegal arrest of Senator Trillanes. Eventually, it could be applied to us and it's creating tension within the ranks."

said Alejano.

Alejano maintained that the amnesty granted to him and other former rebel soldiers could also be nullified by President Duterte.

"We are in the same footing as Senator Trillanes because we share the same records. We accomplished the same documents and underwent the same processes. This is going to be one dangerous precedent," Alejano said.

Robredo said the LP is not working to destabilize the Duterte administration.

She also said that while Trillanes comes from a different party (Nationalista Party), the LP stands with the senator as Malacañang's revoking the validity of the amnesty grant "is clearly an attempt to silence the opposition."

"... But for me, there is no party here. Anyone who becomes a victim of abuse of power, we will support," she said. — *With Angela Lopez de Leon and Peter Tabingo*

Filing of candidacies for May 2019 elections set Oct. 1- 5

BY GERARD NAVAL

It will soon be election time. Candidates looking to run in the May 2019 elections have from October 1 to 5 to file their certificates of candidacy (COCs) for senators and local elective posts, the Commission on Elections (Comelec) announced.

The period for the filing of COCs was contained in Comelec Resolution No. 10420, promulgated on September 7, which lays down the rules and regulations for political conventions, submission of nominees of party-list groups and the filing of COCs and nominations of political parties or coalitions in connection with the May 13, 2019 national and local elections.

The Comelec said aspirants for senators, members of the House of Representatives, and provincial, city, municipal, or ARMM regional officials may file their COCs in designated offices depending on the elective posts they are running for.

"No person can run for the position... unless such aspirant accomplishes and files a sworn COC in the form prescribed by the Commission," it also said.

Candidates for senators must file their COCs at the Comelec law department in its main office in Manila.

Those running for congressmen in Metro Manila must file their COCs at the office of the Regional Election Director (RED) - National Capital Region; while

aspirants in the provinces can file their COCs at the office of the Provincial Election Supervisor (PES).

Individuals seeking provincial posts can also file their COCs at the PES office, while those seeking city/municipal posts should go to the Office of the Election Officers (EO).

Meanwhile, candidates running for ARMM governor and vice governor must file their COCs at the office of the RED - ARMM; while those running for ARMM Legislative Assembly members must file theirs at the concerned PES.

The Comelec said aspirants can personally file their COCs, or send their duly-authorized representative, from October 1 to 5 from 8

See FILING > Page B6

FILING

a.m. to 5 p.m. It will not entertain COCs filed through mail, electronic mail or fax.

Meanwhile, party-list groups and organizations may also start nominating their representatives

from October 1-5.

The poll body said Certificates of Acceptance of Nomination (CONA) of party-list groups should be filed simultaneously with the Certificates of Nomination at the Comelec law department in Intramuros, Manila from

8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Forms for the COCs and CONA may be secured from Comelec offices or downloaded for free from the Comelec website.

The Comelec reminded aspirants that upon filing of their COCs or acceptance of their nominations, a

public appointive official, including active members of the AFP and those from government-owned and -controlled corporations, shall be deemed automatically resigned from office and must vacate their position immediately.

A tentative list of candidates

for purposes of the name that will appear on the official ballots shall be posted by the Comelec starting November 5 at their official website and at the offices where the COCs were filed in order to allow

aspirants to check if their names are accurately listed.

For party-list nominees, a Certified List of Nominees shall be prepared by the poll body not later than October 30.

Militar, pulis kakasuhan *Kapag inaresto si Trillanes*

Posible umanong maharap sa patungpatong na kaso ang militar at pulis kapag sinunod nito ang utos ni Pangulong Duterte na pagpaparesto kay Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV sa ilalim ng Proclamation No. 572.

Sa pahayag ni Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) president Abdiel Dan Fajardo, nangga't walang inilabas na warrant of arrest ang korte kay Trillanes

NI DORIS FRANCHE

ay hindi ito pwedeng dakipin.

Paliwanag ng abogado, dapat din respetuhin ng mga otoridad ang pag-ako ng Senado sa kustodiya ng mambabatas

Habang maaaring kasuhan ng arbitrary arrest at illegal detention ang mga opisyal na magpupumili, arestuhin s. Trillanes.

Dapat anyang isipin

ng militar at pulis ang batas, legalidad at hindi dapat na magpadikta kaninuman.

Matatandaan na ipinalabas ng Pangulo ang Presidential Proclamation 572 na nagbabasura sa amnestiyang ibinigay kay Trillanes ng nakaraang administrasyon.

Hindi umano nakasunod sa requirements ng amnesty si Trillanes kaya ni-revoke ang kan-

yang amnesty.

Sa Proclamation 572, sinasabing hindi naghain ng isang Official Amnesty Application Form si Trillanes at wala silang makitang available record ng aplikasyon niya para sa amnesty.

Kasunod nito ay inutos ng Pangulo sa AFP at PNP ang pagpaparesto sa senador

Gayunman, nagosasyon si Pangulong Duterte na hintayin na lang ang magiging hakbang ng hukuman kung magpapalabas ito ng warrant of arrest laban kay Trillanes.

Sanctuary takes toll on Trillanes

By Julie M. Aurelio
@JMAurelioINQ

Several days of holing up in his Senate office might be taking its toll on Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, who was reportedly feeling unwell.

Magdalo Rep. Gary Alejano, who came to visit on Sunday, said the senator was a bit under the weather.

"He has a cold because he has been very tired. Day and night, he's talking to someone or having interviews, so that's very tiring," Alejano told reporters.

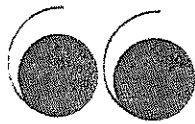
At around noon on Sunday, the senator came out of his office to check where the members of the media, who have been staking out his office, were resting.

"I slept well last night ... I'm doing better," Trillanes said, as he briskly walked back to his office.

Rough time

He maintained that he could not turn himself in since it would boost the allegations in President Duterte's proclamation that revoked his amnesty.

Alejano said Trillanes was



He has a cold because he has been very tired. Day and night, he's talking to someone or having interviews, so that's very tiring

Gary Alejano
Magdalo Representative

being given time to rest, as he has had a tough time since Tuesday.

The senator has been staying in his office since Tuesday when Mr. Duterte revoked his amnesty.

Despite Mr. Duterte's pronouncement that he will not order the senator's arrest without a warrant from the court, Alejano said he could not trust the President's word.

"You cannot really trust the

President because the police and military were not yet given orders to go home or not to arrest him," he said.

Alejano added that Trillanes would go with the arresting team peacefully as long as it had a legal, valid arrest warrant.

Revival of court cases

But the scrapping of Trillanes' amnesty must first be challenged and he must be given a chance before the courts to present his evidence.

"Once the amnesty is invalidated, that's the basis to revive the cases, then to issue the arrest warrant. But what they did was a shortcut," Alejano said.

He dismissed as harassment the string of cases being lodged against Trillanes in the past week, such as the libel complaint filed by the President's eldest son, Paolo Duterte.

"It will not stop Trillanes from doing his mandate to be the voice of the people as a senator of the opposition. If we become all scared, who will speak up?" Alejano added. INQ

SENATORS SUPPORTERS FLOCK TO SENATE BUILDING

By Lella A. Salaverria
and Rodolfo C. Manalac
@Team_Inquirer

Supporters of Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV continued to show up at the Senate building, ready to shield him should the authorities come to arrest him without a warrant.

President Duterte, however, has told the military and the police to allow due process to Trillanes IV, fighting the government's application for a warrant in a Makati court and has asked the Supreme Court to do the same to suspend the presidential order voiding the amnesty given to him as military rebel.

On Saturday, supporters sponsored a Mass for Trillanes IV outside his Senate office, with Manila Auxiliary Bishop Broderick Tabillo and Fr. Robert Reyes officiating.

Among those who attended the Mass were former Education Secretary Armin Pasinao, former Justice Secretary Luistro and former Pre-
2018

SENATOR'S SUPPORTERS FLOCK TO SENATE

FROM A1

idential Adviser on the Peace Process Teresita Deles.

In his homily, Pabillo said the scrapping of Trillanes' amnesty could be a government tactic to divert the public's attention from the numerous problems of the country.

Another Mass was celebrated for Trillanes at the same venue on Sunday afternoon.

Trillanes has been holed up in his Senate office since Tuesday to avoid arrest.

Senate leaders have said that no member would be arrested within its premises. But Trillanes has promised to honor a warrant issued by a civilian court.

Coping well

The senator told reporters on Saturday that he, his wife and their two college-age children were coping well with the controversy.

"The family is in high spirits as well. We've been through worse," he said.

"I don't want them to be subject to this kind of experience again, but fate has brought us here. We're praying for strength for everyone," he said.

Support from others

"They understood that when I took up this task of being a public servant, a public official, there are risks involved," he said.

They are also getting sup-

port from outside the family. The mother of his son's girlfriend is praying for him, he said.

"Everybody has been very, very supportive, helpful," he added.

But his mother, who has Parkinson's disease, has not been told about what's going on, he said.

People have been streaming in and out of Trillanes' fifth-floor office in the Senate building since Tuesday to show their support for him.

A 70-ish but sprightly woman, who identified herself as "urban poor," said she went there after hearing that Trillanes was under threat of arrest and in need of support from the people.

Man of few words

"I'm grateful and moved by the outpouring of support and sympathy," Trillanes told the Inquirer. "I'm humbled by such gestures, and I assure everyone that nothing has changed. I won't waver in the fight for truth and democracy."

The Inquirer joined a cousin of Trillanes on a night out and learned that as a kid, the senator was "shy and reserved."

"While other kids would play around, he'd rather stay home in Caloocan," the cousin said.

"He is still a man of few words, but he keeps his word. He is really upright like his father (Navy Capt. Antonio Tril-

lanes Sr.), who was not corrupt," the cousin said.

Trillanes lives modestly in a house originally owned by his in-laws, which he has renovated, the cousin said.

The Inquirer called up a classmate of Trillanes at the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) and learned that as a cadet, Trillanes was a high achiever.

"I remember that he was the chair of the PMA honor committee, which imposes disciplinary action on violations of the school's honor code," the classmate said.

Not worst experience

Having been detained in military jails for seven years, holing up in the Senate building is not the worst experience for Trillanes.

He was first detained in 2003 for the Oakwood mutiny, where junior officers sought the removal of then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for corruption.

While undergoing trial in 2007, he and fellow soldiers walked out of a Makati courtroom and laid siege to the Peninsula Manila hotel while calling for Arroyo's ouster.

At that time, Trillanes was already serving his first term as senator, which he won after campaigning from his detention cell.

The classmate said he believed Trillanes would survive this latest challenge to his integrity. INQ

President will yield to SC on Trillanes

By GENALYN D. KABILING, FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD, and REY G. PANALIGAN

President Duterte is prepared to respect the ruling of the Supreme Court (SC) on a petition questioning the validity of his proclamation that voided the amnesty granted to Senator Antonio Trillanes IV.

The President, however, said that if the SC affirms the legality of his proclamation, he would let the military deal with the former rebel soldier.

"Nandiyan na sa Supreme Court (it's in the Supreme Court) I leave it at that. If the don't want to accept it," he added.

Trillanes earlier asked the SC to nullify the President's Proclamation No. 572 that revoked his amnesty and authorized his prosecution and detention over involvement in two military uprisings.

The senator, who has denounced Duterte's order as political persecution, has argued that the proclamation violated his rights to due process and equal protection. It also supposedly violated the rule on double jeopardy since the courts have dismissed the cases against him.

The President recently declared that amnesty given to Trillanes as "void ab initio" since he failed to meet its minimum requirements including admission of guilt for 2003 Oakwood mutiny and the 2007 Peninsula Manila hotel siege.

In deference to the judicial process, Duterte also decided to wait for the regional trial court to issue an arrest warrant against Trillanes instead of authorizing his military arrest.

In his remarks last Saturday, the President maintained that the amnesty granted to Trillanes by the previous administration was "defective" and "fatally flawed."

Will SC issue TRO?

The High Court is set to tackle tomorrow the petition filed by Trillanes who pleaded to nullify Proclamation No. 572.

In his petition, Trillanes pleaded for the issuance of a temporary restraining order (TRO) that would stop the implementation of the proclamation and the enforcement of the arrest and detention

Supreme Court would say that my declaration, proclamation is null and void, then let it fall." Duterte said during a press conference in Davao City after arriving from his trip to Israel and Jordan last Saturday.

"But then pagka...if I'm affirmed or sustained, then it's the military now. Sila man ang last hold. Sino man ang naghawak sa kanya last? Eh 'di sa kanila, eh 'di bahala sila kung ayaw nilang tanggapin (They had the last hold. Who held him last? It's the military so it's up to them if they

SC lawyers, who requested anonymity, said only the plea to nullify the proclamation may be acted during tomorrow's full court session, and the High Court may require the Executive Department to comment on or answer the petition.

They said that due process dictates that the side of the Executive Department and all those included as respondents in the petition have to be heard on the issue.

On the plea for a TRO on the arrest and detention, the lawyers said the issue has not become justiciable since no arrest order has been issued by any court and, as a consequence, Trillanes has not been arrested.

Trillanes has been holed up in his Senate office since last Tuesday when the proclamation revoking his amnesty was made public.

Legal scenario

In expressing their view on the arrest of Trillanes, the SC lawyers banked on President Duterte's pronouncement that the senator would not be arrested without an arrest order from the court.

But they said the legal scenario in tomorrow's full court deliberation on Trillanes' petition may change should Branch 150 of the Makati City regional trial court (RTC) issue today (Monday, September 10) or tomorrow morning (Tuesday, September 11) an arrest order pleaded by the Department of Justice (DOJ) in a motion filed last Friday.

The SC's full court session every Tuesday normally starts at 10 a.m.

The new motion, filed before the sala of Judge Elmo Alameda, was in connection with Trillanes' participation in the 2007 Peninsula Manila siege.

The DOJ motion cited that the rebellion case in connection with the hotel siege has not reached the trial stage when the trial court handed down an order on Sept. 7, 2011 granting the appeal of Trillanes to dismiss the charge as a result of the 2010 Proclamation No. 75 that granted him amnesty, including others involved in the two incidents – the 2003 Oakwood mutiny and the 2001 hotel siege.

Earlier, the DOJ had filed a similar motion before Branch 148 of the Makati City RTC where the case involving the Oakwood mutiny was filed.

But RTC Judge Andres Soriano did not act immediately on the plea for the issuance of a warrant of arrest and a hold-departure order (HDO) against Trillanes.

Judge Soriano required Trillanes to file his answer and set a hearing on the DOJ motion on September 13.

'Amnesty legit'

For his part, the former chair of the Ad Hoc Committee that granted amnesty to Trillanes and other Magdalo members said yesterday that he did his job meticulously, contrary to claims made by the government.

In an interview, former Department of National Defense (DND) Undersecretary for Defense Affairs and Amnesty

Committee Chairman Honorio S. Azcueta said that the granting of amnesty to Trillanes was not flawed.

"I can honestly say that as Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Amnesty I conscientiously did my job in accordance with the Proclamation 75 and its rules," Azcueta said.

Azcuela, at the same time, said that Trillanes applied for amnesty and there was admission of guilt on his part. "Obviously. That's why on records he was granted Amnesty," Azcueta said.

He added that the only difference of Trillanes' application of that of the other grantees is "Their narrations of their participation in the incidents may be different."

Military stance

Meanwhile, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Chief of Staff said the military submits to the majesty of the SC and yields to its wisdom as it tackles the petition filed by Trillanes against Proclamation No. 572.

General Carlito Galvez Jr. said that in deference to the SC that has taken cognizance of the case, "we will not anymore comment on its merits as we hope other parties would follow suit."

At the same time, Galvez said that the AFP remains strong as an organization and they are not divided as some may have claimed.

He also warned those who are sowing lies and trying to divide the AFP that they will not succeed with their plans.

"Let me belie claims by some quar-

ters of divisiveness or rumblings in the AFP I assure our people that, as in many times in the past, the AFP will be united and strong as an organization,"

Galvez said.

"Let me then, as the AFP Chief of Staff, take this occasion to warn persons who or groups that attempt to

divide the AFP by sowing intrigues and discord among its Officers and Enlisted personnel. You will not succeed," he added.

Trillanes' TRO unlikely

BY JOMAR CANLAS

SEN. Antonio Trillanes 4th may not be able to get any relief from the Supreme Court (SC) that is set to deliberate on his petition to nullify President Rodrigo Duterte's proclamation voiding the amnesty granted to the former military officer.

The Manila Times learned from some sources at the high court that there is a very slim chance that the tribunal will issue a temporary restraining order in favor of Trillanes, who has been staying at the Senate since last week.

EXCLUSIVE The Times learned that at least four magistrates will be on leave this week and would not be able to attend the en banc session on Tuesday. Three justices will be on official business starting Monday and will be back at the court next week.

These are Associate Justices Marvic Leonen, Noel Tijam and Alexander Gesmundo. The three magistrates will fly to The Hague in the Netherlands and attend the 125th Anniversary of The Hague Conference on Private International Law. They

► TROA2

■ TRO FROM A1

Trillanes' TRO unlikely

are also scheduled to visit the International Court of Justice and meet the Secretary General of the Philippine Court of Arbitration.

On the other hand, Senior Associate Justice Antonio Carpio will be on wellness leave for two weeks.

Thus, only nine justice will discuss Trillanes' petition, including Chief Justice Teresita Leonardo de Castro and the ponente or the one in charge of studying and writing the ruling on the case — Associate Justice Diosdado Peralta.

Unimpeachable sources told the Manila Times that most of the justices are considering two options: give due course to the petition and issue an order directing the respondents to submit their comment or dismiss the case outright and let the Makati City Regional Trial Court handle the case.

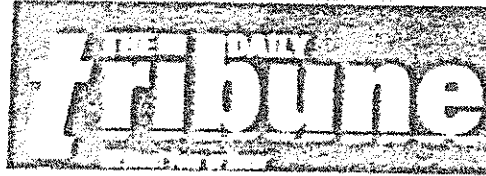
The sources pointed out that with only nine magistrates discussing the case, the possibility of issuing a TRO looks unlikely.

Trillanes, through his lawyer, on Thursday filed a petition asking the high court to issue a writ of preliminary injunction or temporary restraining order stopping the respondents from implementing Proclamation 572 of President Rodrigo Duterte which revoked the amnesty given by former President Benigno Aquino 3rd.

Named respondents in the case were Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Department of the Interior and Local Government officer in charge Eduardo Año, Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra, Armed Forces Chief Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr. and Philippine National Police Chief Oscar Albayalde.

Trillanes claimed that voiding his amnesty without congressional approval is a clear violation of the 1987 Constitution.

He urged the high court to immediately issue a TRO to stop authorities from arresting him. The senator claimed that the President has no power to revoke an amnesty.



Copy of papers best evidence

The amnesty document should have been among the important papers for Trillanes since it erases his culpability

The Palace said yesterday beleaguered Sen. Antonio

Trillanes IV should produce a copy of the amnesty application he filed in 2011 to prove its validity.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said on radio since the Department of National Defense (DND) cannot find the document, the burden falls on Trillanes to come up with the form which he supposedly

submitted.

"If the DND copy can't be found, it would be up to him to show a copy since all such documents submitted to the government have a copy for the recipient," he said.

"So we can stop arguing, he should show the duly-received application form. It would be the

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Timing of the filing of the libel complaints vs Trillanes had nothing to do with the nullification of the amnesty

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best evidence rule, if that is written, that should be the best evidence," he added.

The controversy over the amnesty form stemmed from the invalidation of the privilege given to Trillanes through Proclamation 572 signed by the President last 31 August.

Trillanes obtained the amnesty from former President Benigno Aquino that freed him from liabilities as a result of his involvement in failed military takeover attempts against former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

The proclamation indicated the amnesty was void from the start for failing to meet "minimum requirements to qualify under the amnesty proclamation."

The directive also ordered the senator's arrest.

Trillanes later on showed video shots of an event where he supposedly submitted the amnesty and a photo of his application form along with a certificate of amnesty and decisions of the court dismissing rebellion and *coup*

d'etat cases against him.

"He showed a lot of things while continuously making several claims but where is the duly-received application form? If he does not have a copy, he should say so, but it was not possible that he was not given the document at all," Roque said.

"It is hard to imagine that he lost such a document. We have several important documents that we keep in a safe place and the amnesty document should have been among the important papers for Trillanes since it erases his culpability from three capital offenses involving *coup d'etat* no less which is punishable with the maximum penalty of life imprisonment," he added.

No agenda

Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra said the issuance of Proclamation 572 and the filing of libel cases against Trillanes were not designed to be filed one after the other.

"The timing of the filing of the libel complaints vs Senator Trillanes, according to the complainants, had

nothing to do with the nullification of the Senator's amnesty. The libel complaints were filed on the anniversary date of the utterance of the allegedly defamatory statements," Guevarra said in reply to allegations that the two events were an orchestrated plan to bring down the opposition senator.

If he does not have a copy, he should say so.

He added Mr. Duterte's proclamation was signed last 31 August and disclosed to the public only last 2 September while the filing of the two libel cases by presidential son and former Davao City Vice Mayor Paolo Duterte and presidential son-in-law Manases Carpio against Trillanes was on 6 September but reported on 7 September.

Carpio is the husband of President's daughter and Davao City Mayor Inday Sara Z. Duterte.

Guevarra earlier had said the Department of Justice (DoJ) will not intervene in the libel case against the senator.

"No, I will not interfere in the conduct of the preliminary investigation. It is not proper," he said.

Only SC can stop arrest

The justice chief added the Makati City Regional Trial Court (RTC) does not have to wait for the Supreme Court (SC) to act on the petition filed by Trillanes.

He said the Makati RTC can proceed with acting on the criminal cases against the beleaguered senator over his involvement in the 2003 Oakwood mutiny and the 2007 Manila Peninsula siege.

"Unless restrained by the SC, the trial courts may proceed," he said.

The DoJ has already filed separate motions before Makati RTC Branches 148 and 150 asking that arrest warrants and hold departure orders be issued against Trillanes.

The DoJ filed the motion before Branch 148 on Tuesday while the motion before Branch 150 was filed on Friday.

Branch 148 is handling the *coup d'etat* case against Trillanes concerning the Oakwood mutiny while Branch 150 is handling the rebellion case against the senator over the Manila Peninsula siege.

Judge Andres Soriano of Branch 148 has already ordered a hearing on 18 September over the DoJ's motion.

Soriano has also directed Trillanes to file a comment regarding the DoJ's motion.

FM foes now target Rody

Enrile says old script being used

The bottom line here is power which they so desire

By Mario J. Mallari

The groups that ousted former President Ferdinand Marcos have reformed their line and had started to move towards bringing down the administration of President Rodrigo Duterte, former Senate President Juan Ponce-Enrile said yesterday.

Enrile said he sees "orchestrated" moves by various anti-government groups — riding on the issues of rising inflation rate and unstable supply and prices of rice.

He said the same issues were raised and taken advantage of during the latter years of the late President Ferdinand Marcos.

"The same groups — priests, nuns and the left, that hit President Marcos then are now coming out now... the same tactics, the same issues," said Enrile.

"If the government calibration on these issues is not good, they will use all possible issues [against Mr. Duterte]," he added.

In an interview by the *Daily Tribune*, Enrile said the groups in the oust Duterte movement, including the communists, could be gaining momentum by using the detrimental issues facing the administration as their weapons.

The bottom line here is "power" which they so desire, according to Enrile.

"It's a good thing that the President cut his trip to Jordan short. As Commander in Chief, his presence here amid these issues is very important," Enrile told the *Daily Tribune*.

The President arrived Saturday or one day ahead of his full schedule in Jordan where he had an official visit since Thursday. Prior to his meeting with King Abdullah II, Mr. Duterte visited Israel.

"My analysis is there is an orchestrated effort (to weaken the government). They (administration) should study and look

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We don't see any connection between high prices and the cases against Trillanes

From page 1

at this very closely," he added.

"Power is a very sensitive matter...many are willing to die or kill for power...it can trigger war and even revolution," Enrile added.

Conductor in background

Without identifying any specific group or individuals, Enrile theorized there are persons or groups behind the orchestrated effort.

"There are conductors for this, nobody will move without orders," he stressed.

The former Senate President cited the rising inflation rate, the unstable supply and prices of rice and even the housing problem as among the issues now being exploited by government critics to gain momentum. **BB**

Enrile urged the government to address immediately to unstable prices and supply of rice to arrest any momentum, if there is any, gained by government detractors.

There is an orchestrated effort to weaken the government.

Malacañang echoed Enrile's views as Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said Senator Antonio Trillanes IV is using inflation as a political issue against the administration.

"Now that we have higher inflation, Trillanes is using this as a political issue," Roque said.

Inflation was recorded at 6.4 percent in August, the highest in over nine years from 6.6 percent in March 2009.

"We don't see any connection between high prices and the cases against Trillanes; Trillanes committed a crime, thrice. If he can't prove that his amnesty is legitimate then he had to account for his misdeeds," said Roque.

Cease interpretations

Former rebel-soldier Sen. Gregorio Honasan also urged the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to only enforce the law and not be part of interpreting it in connection with the revocation of the amnesty granted to Trillanes.

Honasan, who was among the leaders of the rightist Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang

Makabansa (RAM), said the AFP should leave the interpretation of the law to the courts amid clashes of opinions over the proclamation.

"Uphold the rule of law and due process, obey the legally prescribed chain of command, allow the legal courts (not media) to decide and rule on matters of law," Honasan said when asked of the appropriate stance of the AFP in the issue surrounding Trillanes.

"Implement policy and enforce the law and not interpret it," he added.

In issuing Proclamation 572, Mr. Duterte ordered the revocation of the amnesty granted to Trillanes by former President Aquino in connection to his involvement in the 2003 shortlived Oakwood mutiny and the 2007 Manila Peninsula siege.

Trillanes is among the core leaders of the Magdalo Group which launched the Oakwood mutiny on July 27, 2003 and called for the ouster of then President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Arroyo.

On the other hand, Honasan led several coup d'etat against the administration of the late President Cory Aquino.

A member of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Class of 1971, Honasan was himself a beneficiary of government amnesty offered during the Ramos administration.

After being amnestied under Duterte's predecessor, Benigno Aquino III, Trillanes successfully petitioned two Philippine courts to dismiss rebellion and coup cases against him, allowing him to later run for public office.

Nobody will move without orders.

Despite many legal questions, the Department of Justice has asked the courts to issue a warrant for the senator's arrest and revive rebellion cases against him. Separately, the Department of Defense said earlier this week that it has deployed officers to the Senate to take custody of Trillanes and have him face a military court of inquiry into his role in the coup attempts. A military detention cell was being readied for him.

Duterte "has made it very clear that although a military tribunal could order his arrest, he prefers and he has ordered that authorities wait for the decision of the regional trial

court," Roque said.

LP denies destabil

The opposition Liberal Party (LP) denied moves to destabilize Mr. Duterte's administration.

"The opposition does not have to do anything. On its own, either by its incompetence or corruption, the government is doing a good job of destabilizing itself," the LP said in a statement.

"All Malacañang has to do is listen to its own allies who, like the opposition, are calling for the resignation of DA and NFA officials for causing the rice crisis. Are they destabilizers too?" it added.

The denial came despite sustained efforts by LP leaders, led by Sen. Francis Pangilinan, to gather and keep people at the Senate premises in support to beleaguered Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV whose amnesty was revoked by President Duterte.

"The accusation of destabilization is downright false. It is ridiculous. Dissent is not destabilization. Every time scandals and controversies hound this administration, whether it be corruption issues or issues of incompetent governance, it blames the opposition," the LP said.

"For everyone's sake, instead of throwing baseless accusations at LP and the opposition, the government should listen to the cry of the people and focus on rising prices of goods and lack of jobs that would sufficiently provide for the average Filipino family," it added.

Michael Pingo

by

Robredo, Trillanes disown plot to topple Du30 regime

By Nat Mariano, Macon Ramos-Araneta and Francisco Tuyay

SENATOR Antonio Trillanes said Sunday that President Rodrigo Duterte was being paranoid when he spoke of a plot by the Liberal Party and communist rebels to oust him over the weekend.

"He's imagining things because he's already paranoid," Trillanes said in Filipino.

Vice President Leni Robredo, leader of the LP, dismissed the President's

claim as well.

In her radio program on Sunday morning, Robredo said the opposition has been made "a whipping boy" as the government looks for an excuse for its shortcomings.

Senator Francis Pangilinan, LP president, also denied Duterte's allegation, and said the administration was "destabilizing itself."

"The opposition does not have to do anything. On its own, either by its incompetence or corruption, the government is doing a good job of destabilizing itself," Pangilinan said. *Next page*

Robredo,...

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In a speech upon arriving from Jordan, the President said three groups were out to remove him from office.

"Those three, watch them closely. The yellow Liberals, Trillanes, and the politburo... Watch them closely, those three. They are all connected," Duterte said. "They are the ones who will oust me, and it will go into [high gear in] October," he added.

The Armed Forces hierarchy on Sunday declared that the 130,000 military force remained strong and united amidst attempts by some sectors to sow intrigue and polarize the rank and file over Duterte's decision to revoke Trillanes' amnesty.

"Let me belie claims by some quarters of divisiveness or rumblings in the AFP. I assure our people that, as in many times in the past, the AFP will be united and strong as an organization," said AFP chief Gen. Carlito Galvez.

"Let me then, as the AFP chief of staff, take this occasion to warn persons who or groups that attempt to divide the AFP by sowing intrigues and discord among its officers and enlisted personnel," Galvez said. "You will not succeed."

He reminded members of the military to refrain from taking part in partisan politics.

"Our loyalty is to the Constitution," he said.

Galvez has already ordered the creation of a General Court Martial that would resume hearings that were deferred after Trillanes was granted Amnesty in 2011.

He said, however, that no attempt would be made to arrest Trillanes until the Supreme Court has ruled on the matter.

Biazon fears 'domino effect'

Trillanes' amnesty revocation may also apply to others in 2010 coup

By Macon Ramos-Araneta and Rey E. Requejo

FORMER Armed Forces chief Rodolfo Biazon said Sunday that if President Rodrigo Duterte's decision to revoke the amnesty of Senator Antonio Trillanes IV is upheld, then the amnesties granted to his comrades who joined him in his coup attempts might be thrown out as well.

"If there was a mistake in granting amnesty to Trillanes, wouldn't the same thing be said about the grant of amnesty to General [Danilo] Lim, [Nicanor] Fael-don, [Gerardo] Gambala, [Gary] Alejano,

and [Milo] Maestrecampo." Biazon said in Filipino.

He said many of these coup plotters were later appointed by Duterte to key positions in his government. *Next page*

Biazon...

From A1

Biazon, a former senator, said he believed there was no legal basis for the President's revocation of Trillanes' amnesty.

He added that revoking amnesties would erode the people's trust in the institutions of government.

Trillanes on Sunday accused Duterte of being insecure to the point of comparing their respective contributions to the military.

"Well, first of all, there shouldn't be any competition about this. Both of us are expected to look out for the welfare of our soldiers. There should be no competition," Trillanes said.

"But for him to say that I contributed nothing is one big lie," he said, while releasing a list of laws and projects for the enlisted men.

Trillanes also distributed a list of infrastructure projects for the military which were financed through his as-

sistance.

These include the construction of barracks, mess halls and quarters for enlisted personnel, club rooms and quarters for officers, and multi-purpose buildings in different camps around the country.

"If Duterte thinks that he can buy the loyalty of the military and use them as instruments of oppression, he's dead wrong. They will always remain faithful to their constitutional mandate," Trillanes added.

"Instead of persecuting his critics, Mr. Duterte should just focus his remaining energy on solving the major problems confronting our countrymen, foremost of which is the rising cost of living."

Magdalo Rep. Gary Alejano, meanwhile, branded the revocation of Trillanes' amnesty as political persecution, saying the outspoken opposition senator was the only one being targeted.

"The President is sowing political vendetta with the military as his instru-

ment. That is very wrong," he said.

"Eventually, it could be applied to us. You are putting the military again in a tense situation," he added.

The Supreme Court is set to deliberate on Trillanes' petition to nullify the revocation of his amnesty and to prevent his arrest on Tuesday.

The government has asked two Makati courts to issue an arrest warrant against Trillanes, but neither of them has done so.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines said Sunday a court-martial can take custody of a soldier's case if the grant of amnesty is lifted.

AFP Public Affairs Office chief Colonel Noel Detoyato made the remark on Sunday following the revocation of the amnesty granted to Trillanes.

In an interview with radio dzBB, Detoyato said all persons under sentence adjudged by court-martial will remain under the jurisdiction of the latter until the case is either dismissed, acquitted, convicted, sentenced, or halted by a supervening event.

Former DND exec backs Trillanes on amnesty application

BY VICTOR REYES

A DEFENSE official of the previous government yesterday backed the statement of opposition Sen. Antonio Trillanes that he applied for amnesty.

Honorio Azcueta, former defense undersecretary who headed the committee that processed amnesty applications under the Aquino administration, said Trillanes applied for amnesty and there was an admission of guilt.

"Obviously, That's why on records he was granted amnesty," said Azcueta when pressed if Trillanes indeed applied for amnesty and there was admission of guilt on his part.

Trillanes' application form is missing, according to Proclamation 572 which nullifies the amnesty granted to Trillanes in 2011. The proclamation said the nullification was also based on the ground that Trillanes did not admit guilt.

Trillanes, a former Navy lieutenant, was involved in the Oakwood mutiny in July 2003 and the occupation of the Manila Peninsula in November 2007.

Duterte wants him arrested. Trillanes has a petition pending before the Supreme Court questioning the proclamation order signed by Duterte on August 31.

Last week, former defense secretary Voltaire Gazmin said the application of Trillanes and others "went through the process" before they were granted amnesty. Also last week, current defense spokesman Arsenio Andalong said Trillanes filed an application form but the document is missing.

Azcqueta defended his actions that led to the grant of amnesty.

"I can honestly say that as chair of the ad hoc committee on amnesty, I conscientiously did my job in accordance with the Proclamation 75 and its rules," he said.

Proclamation 75 was issued by Aquino in November 2010 for military and policemen and their supporters who figured in the plots to oust his predecessor, now Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Trillanes filed his application in Camp Aguinaldo before the ad hoc committee on Jan. 5, 2011.

Gazmin granted amnesty to Trillanes and other applicants, based on the recommendation of Azcueta's committee. Trillanes was later issued with a certificate of amnesty and he took his oath of allegiance before Gazmin.

Asked what the difference is between the application of Trillanes and that of other amnesty grantees, said: "Their narrations of their participation in the incidents maybe different."

In the application form, the applicants were asked to narrate their participation in the Oakwood mutiny, the November 2007 Manila Peninsula case, and in the February 2009 withdrawal of support from Arroyo.

Duterte, in the proclamation voiding Trillanes' amnesty, also ordered the Armed Forces to take custody of Trillanes and to resume court martial proceedings against him.

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FORMER

for violation of the Articles of War.

AFP chief Gen. Carlos Valdez I. Sison has "no comment" on the suspended court martial but will continue Trillanes' trial but court martial proceedings will be held in abeyance until the SC has ruled on the validity of PP 572.

"In deference to the SC that has taken cognizance of the case, we will not anymore comment on its merits as we hope other parties would follow suit," he also said.

Trillanes was charged with violation of Articles of War 96 (conduct unbecoming of an officer and a gentleman) and 97 (conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline) before he was granted amnesty.

FAVORABLE DECISION

Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra is confident of getting favorable decisions from Makat regional trial court, Branch 148 and 150 or the justice department's petition seeking the issuance of warrants of arrest and hold departure order against Trillanes.

Branch 148 is handling the coup d'état case against Trillanes in connection with the 2003 Oakwood mutiny while Branch 150 is handling the rebellion case in connection with the 2007 Manila Peninsula occupation.

In 2011, Branch 148 dismissed the said case after the amnesty grant.

Branch 148 Judge Andres Soriano set for hearing on September 13 the motion for arrest warrant.

No hearing date has been set by Branch 150 Judge Eimo Alameda. Trillanes' camp is saying Alameda dismissed the case on Sept. 7, 2011. — *With Ashgel Hachero*

Amnestiya, pinanindigan ng ex-DND isec

NI FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

Iginilit kahapon ng dating chairman ng Ad Hoc Committee ng Department of National Defense (DND) na buong ingat at katapatan niyang tinupad ang kanyang tungkulin nang pagkalooban niya ng amnestiya si Senator Antonio Trillanes IV at ang iba pang sundalong Magdalo, taliwas sa sinasabi ng kasalukuyang administrasyon na may mga pagkakamali sa paggagawad sa nasabing amnestiya.

Sa isang panayam, sinabi ng dating Department of National Defense (DND) Undersecretary for Defense Affairs and Amnesty Committee Chairman Honorio S. Azcueta na ang wariang teknikalidad sa amnestiyang ibinigay kay Trillanes.

"I can honestly say that as Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Amnesty I conscientiously did my job in accordance with the Proclamation 75 and its rules," giti ni Azcueta.

Aniya nag-advocate si Trillanes ng amnestiya at tramitir din ang pagkakasala sa mga inilunsad na kudeta.

"Obviously, That's why on records he was granted Amnesty," sabi ni Azcueta.

Nilinaw ni Azcueta na ang tanging pagkakaiba sa aplikasyon ni Trillanes sa iba pang Magdalo soldiers ay "their narrations of their participation in the incidents"

Una na ring kinumpirma ni dating Defense Secretary Voltaire

Gazmin na nagsumite si Trillanes ng aplikasyon para sa amnestiya.

Matatandaang sa bisa ng Proclamation No. 572 ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ay pinawalang-bisa nitong Miyerkules ang amnestiyang ibinigay kay Trillanes dahil sa mga teknikalidad na nagpapatunay na sa simula pa man ay wala nang bisa ang nasabing amnestiya o "void ab initio".

Kasunod nito, ipinag-utos ng Pangulo ang paglalap sa senador.

Kaagad namang dumuloag ang kampo ni Trillanes sa Korte Suprema para humiling ng temporary restraining

order (TRO) laban sa pagbawi sa amnestiya ng senador.

Nakatakdang namang talaxayin bukas, Setyembre 11, ng Korte Supreme ang nasabing petisyon ni Trillanes, at posibleng hingar ng opinyon ang Executive Department sa petisyon ng senador, ayon sa mga abogado ng kataas-taasang hukuman na tumanggap pangalanan.

Karaniwan nang dakong 10:00 ng umaga nagsisimula ang full court session ng Korte Supreme tuwing Martes.

May ulat ni Rey G. Panaligan



KASYA PARA SA LAHAT? Maagang dumila ang mga Pasigeño para bumili ng NFA rice sa Pasig Mega Market, kahapon. Hanggang limang kilo lang ang ipinagbibili sa mga residente, dahil nasa 600 na sako lang ang na-deliver sa nasabing palengke.

ALVIN KASIBAN

Mga nagawa sa sundalo inilabas ni Trillanes

Pinabulaanan ni Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV ang akusasyon sa kanya ni Pangulong Duterte na walang nagawa bilang mambabatas para sa kapakanan ng sundalo at pulisya.

Upang patunayan na waiang karotonanan ang akusasyon ni Pangulong Duterte ay ipinamigay nito sa media kahapon ang koopya ng mga listahan ng batas at resolusyon na kanyang inakda para sa kabutihan ng mga sundalo at pulisya.

Kabilang dito ang Joint Resolution No. 5 na nagtaas sa Subsistence Allowance of Uniformed Personnel mula P90 to P150; New AFP Modernization Act; the Salary

Standardization Law 3, na nag-increase sa salaries ng uniformed personnel and pensions ng retirees; at RA 10549 na nagtaas sa Burial Assistance for Veterans mula P10,000 sa P20,000.

Bukod dito ay mayroong 15 AFP-related bills na pending sa committee level ng Senado.

Naglabas din ng listahan si Trillanes ng mga intra projects para sa military na napondohan sa pamamagitan niya tulad ng barracks, mess hall, quarters ng enlisted personnel, club rooms at quarters para sa officers, gayundin ang multi-purpose buildings sa mga kampo.

"Duterte is so insecure that he needed to com-

pare his contributions to the military to mine. Well, first of all, there shouldn't be any competition about this, both of us are expected to look out for the welfare of our soldiers. Wala dapat kompetisyon. But for him to say that I contributed nothing, is one big lie," wika pa ni Trillanes.

Kamakalawa ay sinabi ni Duterte na sa kabila ng pagiging malapit ni Trillanes kay dating Pangulong Benigno Aquino III ay halos waiang naitulong ito sa mga sundalo.

"It was all Trillanes, pretending to be a crusading soldier when as a matter of fact, wala naman silang ginawa," wika pa ni Pangulong Duterte. (Rudy Andal)

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'Phi largest recipient of US military aid'

By PIA LEE-BRAGO

The Philippines is the largest recipient of American military assistance in the region valued at over P15 billion for the past three years, the United States embassy in Manila said following the Philippine government's announcement of plans to procure arms and weapons from outside the US.

"We support the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP)'s modernization goals through a variety of programs and initiatives," US embassy spokesperson Molly Koscina said in an email to The STAR on Saturday.

The relationship of the US with the Philippines, according to Koscina, is one of its most enduring in the Indo-Pacific region.

"In the past few years the US has delivered millions of dollars of planes, ships, armored vehicles and small arms to the Philippines, while also training side by side with our Filipino allies," she said.

US grants funded the delivery of military equipment to the AFP, which included the raven tactical unmanned aerial vehicle system worth P60 million (\$1.2 million) which was turned over to

the Philippines in January 2017 and was first tested by the AFP during the Balikatan, then used in Marawi; 200 Glock pistols, 300 M4 carbines, 100 grenade launchers, individual operator gear and four mini-guns to be mounted in helicopters, totaling P250 million (\$5 million) in May 2017; 25 combat rubber raiding craft and 30 outboard motors also

in May 2017 and worth P250 million (\$5 million) to support the Philippine Marine Corps' counterterror efforts; and two C-208 Cessna aircraft intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) platforms worth P1.6 billion (\$33 million), including the cost of extra equipment and training, for the Philippine Air Force, among other initiatives. 4

Palace: No arms deal yet with Israel, Jordan

By Julie M. Aurelio
and Germalina Lacorte
@Team_Inquirer

Malacañang on Sunday said there was no assurance just yet if the Philippine government would buy defense equipment from Israel and Jordan following President Duterte's official visit to the two countries.

"No commitment yet," presidential spokesperson Harry Roque said in a text message.

But in another text message, Roque said: "DND and DILG might," referring to the Department of National Defense and the Department of the Interior and Local Government.

The President visited Israel and Jordan from Sept. 3 to 8.

In Israel, Mr. Duterte made an unannounced visit to a facility to view defense equipment.

In Jordan, he joined King Abdullah II in touring a military facility and watching an

urban guerrilla demonstration.

Combating terrorism

Earlier, Roque said the President was impressed by what he saw in the two countries as the hardware was cheaper compared to other countries.

Mr. Duterte discussed with Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu issues such as cooperation in combating terrorism and transnational crimes, security and defense, two-way trade and investment and improving people-to-people exchanges.

He also tackled with the Jordanian king several ways to address extremist violence and terrorism, two-way trade and investment, human resource development, interfaith dialogue and tourism.

During his arrival speech at Davao International Airport on Saturday, Mr. Duterte said he had acquired "some arms" during his recent trips to Israel and

Jordan, but did not give additional details.

"I brought something from there, but I won't tell you what kind of arms," he said in Filipino.

He said he wanted to have precision-guided weapons he could use on his war on drugs and other enemies, but he did not disclose if those were the kind of weapons he had acquired from the trips.

'Precision-guided weapons'

"Part really [of the purpose of the trips] was also the welfare of overseas workers abroad and to shop for arms," Mr. Duterte said.

"And mind you, [when] used against terrorism or extremism, [they're just giving these to you] because we have the common enemy, [all of the places I've been to are hot against] terrorism," the President said.

He said his meeting with the Israeli prime minister and the Jordanian king included

talks on identifying cooperation to combat terrorism and extremism.

Duterte said precision-guided weapons, which the United States had, were the kinds he would need to finish his war on drugs.

'Vicious drug front'

"I'm facing a vicious drug front controlled by the Bamboo triad, our container circuit being used (by Sinaloa) to place cocaine. If I want to end it, I don't have the weapons like what they have," he said, referring to the United States.

"If I only had those precision-guided weapons, everything here would be wiped out, including the trees," he said.

The President had again slammed the United Nations, the United States and Canada during his speech, particularly the two countries for refusing to sell arms to him because of widespread criticisms on his war on drugs. INQ *M*

PH eyes Israel, Jordan as source of military hardware

By GENALYN D. KABELING

The government is looking into the possible purchase of defense equipment from Israel and Jordan following President Duterte's official visit.

Presidential Spokesman Harry

Roque said the Department of National Defense (DND) and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) might consider the acquisition of weapons from the two countries ▶6

PH eyes Israel...

amid reported cheaper costs.

But for now, Roque said there was no commitment yet on any weapons deal with the two nations.

Roque made the remarks a day after President Duterte returned to the country with revitalized economic, labor, and defense relations with Israel and Jordan.

In his trip to Israel, the President, who admitted he prefers the military to get intelligence gathering Israel equipment, visited a military facility to view its modern defense hardware.

Duterte was given a tour of Jordan's special operations training center where he witnessed an urban terrain

demonstration by the Jordanian forces. Jordan has promised to give two attack helicopters and other equipment such as mortars, rifles, and rocket-propelled grenade to the Philippines.

Roque said the President was impressed with the defense capability and equipment of the two nations.

"I take it he was equally impressed. And I take it also that the costs of the hardware were a lot cheaper compared to where we to buy it from other countries," Roque said during a recent media interview.

"Basta sabi lang nila, they were impressed by it and it was a lot cheaper compared to what they have seen from

other countries," he added.

When he returned to Davao City last Saturday, the President was asked about the possible arms deal with Israel and Jordan.

"In other areas, except young military and police equipment, I can only answer that. Yes, we can increase or also import, it is two-way," he said during a press conference.

"You cannot always say that you have to make money by export. Of course, you earn more when you sell than when you pay. Pero sabi ko sa inyo na meron tayong... marami rin silang wala," he said.

The President was thankful for the hospitality shown by Israel and Jordan during his visit. He also urged Filipinos to visit the two countries, assuring that these are safe places to travel to.

TODAY

Defense, DILG tasked to sew up armaments deals with Israel, Jordan

By Nat Mariano

MALACANANG said Sunday it was studying the possibility of procuring armaments and military equipment from Israel and Jordan to strengthen the Philippines' defenses.

Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque said the Defense and Interior departments "might" start the initiative.

But he said "there is no commitment yet" even as President Rodrigo Duterte instructed the military to only weapons only from Israel, particularly in intelli-

gence gathering

In his speech upon his arrival Saturday afternoon, Duterte was reticent about whether the country would procure armaments from the two countries.

"Well, in other areas except the military and police equipment, I can only answer

that," Duterte said.

But he expressed appreciation for the two countries, calling them "beautiful, safe and unproblematic" with strong military branches.

During his week-long trip, Duterte
Next page

Defense,...

From A1

visited an Israeli facility to view its defense equipment. He also witnessed Israel's demonstration of a response to a possible terrorist attack.

In Jordan, Duterte toured a military facility at the King Abdullah II Special Operations Training Center in Amman as he and several Jordan officials witnessed an urban guerrilla demonstration during the visit.

According to Israeli ministry data, the Holy City is one of the world's top arms dealers, with nearly 60 percent of its defense exports going to the Asia-Pacific region.

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Govt. looking for chances of defense equipment from Israel, Jordan

By GENALYN D. KABILING

The government is looking into the possible purchase of defense equipment from Israel and Jordan following President Duterte's official visit.

Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque said the Department of National Defense and the Department of Interior and Local Government "might" consider the acquisition of weapons from the two countries amid reported cheaper costs.

But for now, Roque said there was "no commitment yet" on any weapons deal with the two nations.

Roque made the remarks a day after President Duterte returned to the country with revitalized economic, labor, and defense relations with Israel and Jordan.

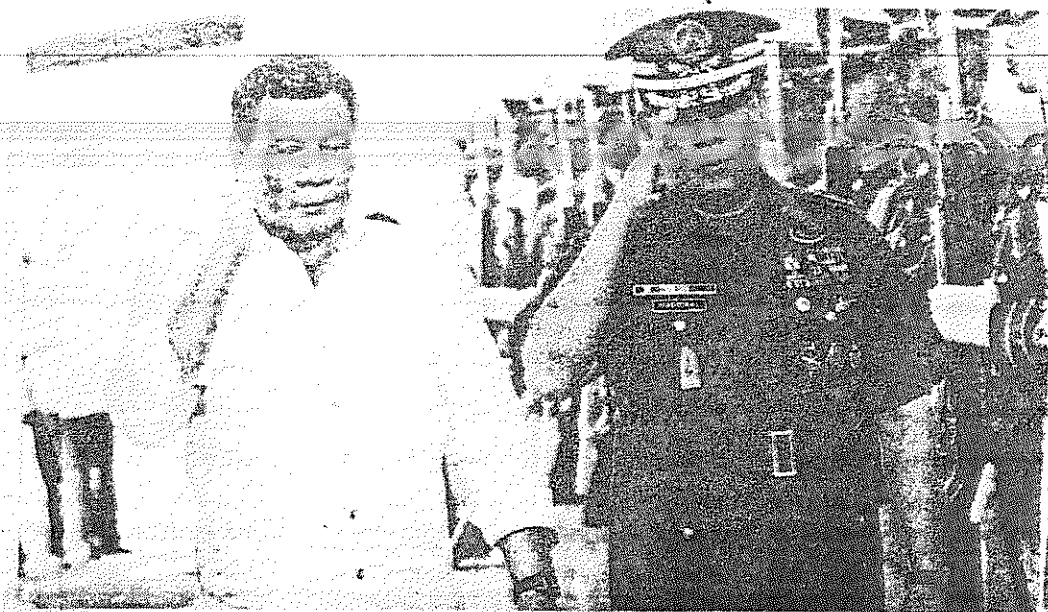
In his trip to Israel, the President, who admitted he prefers the military to get intelligence gath-

ering Israel equipment, visited a military facility to view its modern defense hardware.

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Roque said the President was impressed with the defense capability and equipment of the two nations.

"I take it he was equally impressed. And I take it also that the costs of the hardware were a lot cheaper compared to where we to buy it from other countries," Roque said. "Basta sabi lang nila, they were impressed by it and it was a lot cheaper compared to what they have seen from other countries," he added.



PRESIDENT Duterte troops the line upon his arrival at the Francisco Bangoy International Airport in Davao City from productive official visits to Israel and Jordan. At right is Armed Forces Eastern Mindanao Command chief Lt. Gen. Benjamin Madrigal Jr. (Presidential photo)

Arms deal sa Israel, Jordan possible

NI GENALYN D. KABILING

Pinag-aaralan ng governo ang posibilidad na bumili ng defense equipment mula sa Israel at Jordan matapos ang pagbisita ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

Sinabi ni Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque na maaaring ikonsidera ng Department of National Defense (DND) at ng Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) ang pagbili ng mga armas mula sa dalawang bansa dahil sa mas mababang presyo.

Ito ang ipinahayag ni Roque isang araw matapos bumalik sa bansa ang Pangulo bitbit ang pinasigiang

economic, labor, at defense relations sa Israel at Jordan.

Sinabi ni Roque na humanga ang Pangulo sa defense capability at equipment ng dalawang nasyon.

"I take it he was equally impressed. And I take it also that the costs of the hardware were a lot cheaper compared to where we to buy it from other countries," ani Roque sa panayam ng media kamakailan.

"Basta sabi lang rula, they were impressed by it and it was a lot cheaper compared to what they have seen from other countries," idinugtong niya.

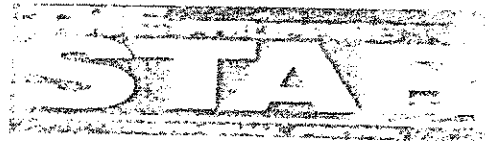
Sa pagbalik niya sa Davao City nitong Sabado, tinanong din ang Pangulo tungkol sa posibleng arms deal sa Israel at Jordan.

"In other areas except military and police equipment, I can only answer that. Yes, we can increase or also import, it is a two-way," ani Duterte sa press conference.

"You cannot always say that you have to make money by export. Of course, you earn more when you sell than when you pay. Pero sabi ko sa inyo na meron fayong -- marami rin silang wala," aniya.

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Phl Navy joins wargames in Australia

Members of the Philippine Navy on board the warship *BRP Ramon Alcaraz* participated in a week-long naval exercise in Darwin, Australia.

Together with other Navy

vessels participating in the Exercise KAKADU 2018, Filipino sailors started the Fleet Tactical Exercises on Friday.

The activities involved 24 ships and submarines, 21 air-

craft and around 3,000 personnel from 27 countries from Asia-Pacific, Indian Ocean and the Middle East.

Naval Task Force Commander Capt. Junjie Tabuada

said the wargames would enhance the knowledge and skills of Filipino sailors.

The exercises will end on Sept. 15.

- Michael Punongbayan

**Mass on 'grounded'
PH navy warship**

Officers and crew of BRP Gregorio Del Pilar (FF15) attended a Thanksgiving Mass on board the ship after its arrival at SBMA, Oringapoc City, over the weekend. Commander Jonathan V. Zata, Navy Spokesman and Director of the Naval Public Affairs Office, said the officers and crew will then undergo a stress debriefing while concurrent efforts are underway in further inspecting the extent of repairs to be done on the ship, which ran aground last month on Hasa-Hasa Shoal. Likewise, Commander Dominic B. Benauric assumed as the new skipper of Del Pilar. (Francie T. Wakarusa)

Pagsabod ng Navy warship imbestigahan na

Sinmulat na ng Philippine Navy (PN) ang pormal na imbestigasyon kaugnay sa pagsasagawa ng BRP Gregorio del Pilar sa Hasa-Hasa Shoal noong Agosto 29 sa West Philippine Sea.

Ang nasabing pagdinig ay isinagawa ng special investigating committee sa pamumuno ni Commodore Toribio Adao Jr.

Tututol ang imbestigasyon hindi lamang sa naturang insidente kundi

para na rin hindi maalik ang kahalintulad na insidente sa hinaharap.

Ang resulta naman ng imbestigasyon ay isusumite sa Flag Officer in Command, habang nagsagawa naman ng misa ng pasasalamat noong Biyernes sa loob ng BRP Gregorio del Pilar nang dumaang ito sa Subic, Zambales.

Bukod dito, sumailalim na rin sa stress debriefing ang mga opisyal

at crew ng BRP Gregorio del Pilar at patuloy rin ang ginagawang inspeksyon dito para maalaman kung gaano kalala ang naging damage ng barko para maayos.

Ayon naman sa PN, si Commander Dominic Benauro, ang bagong kapitan ng BRP Gregorio del Pilar.

Si Benauro ay nagtapos sa Philippine Military Academy Class 2000. (Gemma Garcia)

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DILG chief steers clear of revolutionary gov't talk

By **CHITO A. CHAVEZ**
and **MARTIN A. SADONGDONG**

The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) clarified that it is not spearheading a campaign to shift to federalism through a revolutionary government.

DILG officer-in-charge (OIC) Eduardo M. Año issued the statement in reaction to the claim of DILG Undersecretary Epimaco Denying that the agency has been leading calls for establishing a revolutionary government as the country transitions into a federal system.

Once such a government is set ▶ 6

DILG chief steers...

◀ 1

up, a "People's Council" will be created that will keep President Duterte in power until the new system is in place, Densing said.

But Ado made it clear that the call for a revolutionary government "is the personal opinion of Usec. Densing and not of the DILG. He was speaking as honorary chairman of the Mula sa Masa Duterte Movement (MMDM) and not for the DILG."

He said the official position of the department is to shift to federalism using the draft Federal Constitution written by the Consultative Committee (Concom) appointed by Duterte.

The committee, headed by retired Chief Justice Reynato Puno, has submitted its recommendations to the President.

"We are advocating for federalism through constitutional means. The 1987 Constitution has clear provisions on how a change in the system of government

can be effected. We abide by these provisions and will see to it that any change in the system of government goes through constitutional processes," Ado said.

The DILG has been going around the country informing the people about the merits of the federal system.

The last Federalism Roadshow held in Caraga Region last week was attended by 3,000 participants. Previous roadshows were held in the cities of Dumaguete, Baguio, Cebu, Legazpi, Davao, and Tacloban.

Ado clarified that only duly-accredited civil society organizations can use the DILG's name in advocating federalism.

PNP yields to PRRD

The Philippine National Police (PNP) chief, Director General Oscar Albayalde, meanwhile, said it was up to the President to clear up speculations about the establishment of a revolutionary government.

"Depende 'yan no (It depends), it's not ours to decide dahil hindi level ng PNP 'yan (because it is not on the PNP's level). I think that will be on the level of the Commander-in-Chief," Albayalde

said.

The PNP, however, is ready to provide helpful inputs to the President on the matter, although there already are appropriate government agencies that are capable of doing so, he said.

"I'm sure he has his security advisers kung talagang mag-decide siya na magkaroon ng (if ever he really decide to have a) revolutionary government," he said.

Arriving in Davao City Saturday from a trip to Israel and Jordan, Duterte warned that there are three forces that are plotting to oust him following the chaos brought by the revocation of Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV's amnesty: Trillanes himself, the "Yellows" or the "Liberals" - apparently referring to the Liberal Party, and the politburo or political bureau - the executive committee for communist parties.

Trillanes has claimed that Duterte was planning to declare a revolutionary government to advance his interest following the revocation of his amnesty. He, however, warned the President that such move won't gain support from the military or the police.

Palace officials were quick to assure that Duterte has no plans of forming a revolutionary government.

₱2.9-B rice subsidy set for soldiers, cops

By ELLSON QUISMORIO

The national government intends to give a ₱2.9-billion rice subsidy to soldiers, police officers, and other uniformed personnel. Surigao del Sur 2nd district Rep. Johnny Pimentel revealed on Sunday.

"The subsidy is already factored in in the proposed ₱1.757-trillion General Appropriations Act 2019," bared Pimentel, a member of the House Appropriations Committee.

"It covers financial assistance equivalent to 20 kilos of rice per ▶6

₱2.9-B rice subsidy... ◀1

month, charged to Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE)," said Pimentel even as he noted that the price of the country's main staple food has been on the rise for eight straight months now.

He said uniformed personnel of the following services would be entitled to the subsidy: Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police, Bureau of Fire Protection, Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, Philippine Coast Guard, and the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority.

Rice prices have steadily increased over the last eight months, according to the latest update of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

The PSA said the average retail price of well-milled rice stood at ₱45.71 per kilo in August, up by nine percent compared to a year ago while that of regular-milled rice was ₱42.26 per kilo, up by 11 percent.

Meanwhile, pro-farmer union BUTIL Party-list Rep. Cecil Chavez has criticized the National Food Authority (NFA) for diverting its ₱5.1-billion rice price stabilization and buffer stocking program fund for debt payment, saying it has led to a "national catastrophe" as far as the country's rice supply is concerned.

"That great blunder done via the fund diversion led to rice shortage and the long rice queues and the perception that the government has done a terrible job with the rice supply stabilization work,"

said Chavez, a Minority member.

She said officials of the NFA, NFA Council and the Department of Agriculture should be held accountable as the lack of cheap NFA rice in the market has caused commercial rice prices to shoot up.

"The lack of field work, the absence of data and empirics, the often-flawed decision-making process is rooted on the clueless bureaucrats that dominate the NFA Council," Chavez further said.

She added that the NFA should be overhauled and reformed, while the NFA Council — the policy-making body of the agency — should be revamped.

"Sadly, the inputs from the paddy level are not taken in during the decision-making process because farmers and people grounded on demand and supply of rice have been excluded from the NFA Council," said Chavez.

The NFA Council is the policy-making body of the NFA.

Rice subsidy for cops, soldiers in '19 budget

By Macon Ramos-Araneta

SOLDIERS, police officers and other uniformed personnel will get a P2.9 billion rice subsidy from the government, Surigao del Sur Rep. Johnny Pimentel said Sunday.

"The subsidy is already factored into the proposed P5.757-trillion General Appropriations Act 2019," Pimentel said.

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Rice...

From A1

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Senator Juan Edgardo Angara, meanwhile, pushed for the passage of a bill that would double the amount of social pension from the current P500 to P1,000 to help poor senior citizens.

"This is the sad truth that many of our lolo and lolas have not yet received their social pension from the government," Angara said.

"We must ensure that every Filipino senior citizen receives this well-deserved benefit that will help them meet their daily needs," he added.

Based on the data from the Coalition of Services of the Elderly, only 33 percent or 2.9 million of the estimated 8.7-million elderly population are covered by contributory pension such as the Social Security System, the Government Social Insurance System, and other pension systems.

Of the 5.8-million senior citizens with no contributory pension, only 3.4 million are currently covered by the Social Pension Program for Indigent Senior Citizens of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Meanwhile, Senate President Pro Tempore Kalpi Recto said much of the rising inflation was "self-inflicted and internal."

He said that while world events and external factors could have contributed to rising prices, the government should have anticipated this.

In agriculture, he said, the country can no longer afford greater government participation.

"We must incentivize private sector investment and credit to agriculture to increase productivity. Give farmers their land titles. Allow for land consolidation, private sector investment in technology and mechanization," he said.

He also said the government should also reduce tariffs on agriculture products.

Recto also said it was "bad timing" to push forward with phase two of the administration's tax reform program, particularly because of a looming trade war and conflicts that could affect the global economy.

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57K houses for police, soldiers unoccupied

BACOLOD CITY: Of the 60,000 housing units for members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) nationwide, 57,000 remain unoccupied, according to Sen. Joseph Victor Ejercito.

Ejercito, chairman of the Senate Committee on Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement, who visited on Friday the AFP and PNP housing units in Barangay Felisa, Bacolod City, said the National Housing Authority (NHA), in consonance with a joint resolution filed by him and Rep. Alfredo Benitez (3rd District, Negros Occidental) that was approved by President Rodrigo Duterte, was authorized to redistribute the housing units to willing takers, who are qualified beneficiaries.

Issuance of a joint resolution prompted informal settlers led by Kadamay (Kali-punan ng Damayang Mahihirap)-Negros and its allied groups to storm the military and police housing site in Barangay Felisa, Bacolod City, to demand that the units be awarded to them.

But the NHA said 1,498 housing units have already been awarded to uniformed personnel.

Ejercito said Kadamay members can avail of the houses, as long as they can pay and they are qualified.

"I hope they understand that the collections will be used to build more housing units," he added.

The senator pointed out that 1.2 million housing units are immediately needed.

It will go up to six million in 2022 if the housing backlog will not be addressed.

"What Kadamay did was not good. It does not help the situation," Ejercito said, citing what the militant group also did in Bulacan, Nueva Ecija and recently in Bacolod City.

Uniformed personnel are paying P200 to P400 a month for every housing unit and even the lowest salaried government workers are trying to save money for the housing units, the senator added.

He said the housing project is not free.

Lack of transportation, use of substandard materials and locations of housing projects which are far from the city or town centers, are among the common complaints aired against the housing projects of past administrations, according to Ejercito.

But the new NHA leadership, he said, is undertaking housing reforms, based on recommendation of his committee, and that of Benitez, who heads the House Committee on Housing and Urban Development, he said.

Ejercito added that the creation of a Housing Department, which is now being deliberated on by both Houses of Congress, will improve the quality of housing and increase the number of houses to be constructed.

EUGENE Y. ADIONG

Lifting martial law may lead to more attacks, Mangudadatu warns

MAGUINDANAO 2nd District Rep. Zajid "Dong" Mangudadatu on Sunday batted for the extension of martial law in Mindanao, saying lifting it may embolden terror groups to launch more attacks.

The lawmaker refuted the statement of Senate President Vicente "Tito" Sotto 3rd that discussing the extension of martial law is premature.

"It is not yet time to discuss that. I do not see its necessity yet," Sotto a day after a bomb went off in Isulan town in Sultan Kudarat in late August, killing 2 persons and injuring dozens.

Mangudadatu said that while he respects the opinion of the Senate President, the feelings and preferences of Mindanaoans should be given "the highest consideration."

"Scaling back military control and presence in the southern islands at this moment might embolden these extremists, leading to more deadly attacks. That's why letting its validity elapse on December 31 is illogical," the lawmaker said.

He said extending martial law would bring security and socio-economic relief to Mindanaoans.

"We have seen martial law

keep Mindanao together amid the attack launched by ISIS-linked groups in Marawi last year, but both new and old challenges on the ground require the need for continued military rule," Mangudadatu said.

He said the extension of martial law would guarantee that illegal drug personalities would stay out of business.

"The war on illegal drugs continues in Mindanao. Terrorist threats should not distract authorities from going after these drug suspects. We can't afford to surrender the gains we've made in this fight under the Duterte administration," the lawmaker said.

The government declared martial law in Mindanao on May 23, 2017 after the Maute Group attacked Marawi City. A2

Congress extended martial law until December 31, 2018.

Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo earlier expressed her support to the possible extension of martial law.

"I support martial law in Mindanao. I support what [President Rodrigo Duterte] does because I've been president," Arroyo said.

GLEE JALEA

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Wala munang court martial - AFP

Dahil sa pahayag ni Pangulong Duterte na hindi niya ipapaaresto si Sen. Antonio Trillanes hanggang walang warrant of arrest kaya hindi muna magsasagawa ang General Court Martial (GCM) ng pagdinig laban kay Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV.

Sinabi ni AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr. na hihintayin muna ng Armed Forces of the Philippines ang desisyon ng Korte Suprema kaugnay sa inihain ni Sen. Trillanes na

kumukuwestyon sa legalidad ng Presidential Proclamation 572 na bumabaw sa amnestiya nito.

Tiniyak din n Galvez sa publiko na mananatiling nagkakaisa at matibay ang kanilang organisasyon.

Pinaalalahanan din niya ang bawat sundalo, airman, sailor at marine na huwag makasawsaw o maging bahag ng partisipolitics dahil ang kanilang loyalty ay sa Constitution.

Inatasan din n Galvez

ang kasundaluhan na sumunod sa rule of law at sundin ang chain of commands at ang sinumang labag sa kautusan ay mananagot habang ang bawat personnel naman na masasangkot dito ay kaagad masisibak sa pwesto at limbestigahan.

Bagamat may kanyakanya rin umanong pananaw ang bawat isa sa naturang isyu, dapat pa rin isaalang-alang ang interest ng organisasyon at ng bansa. (Gemma Garcia)

WALA MUNANG COURT MARTIAL-AFP

Hindi muna magsasagawa ang Armed Forces of the Philippines ng General Court Martial laban kay Senador Antonio Trillanes dahil aantayin muna nila ang desisyon ng Korte Suprema.

Ito ay batay na rin sa unang ipinahayag ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na hindi ipapaaresto ang senador hanggang walang warrant of arrest at may nakahain nang petition sa Korte Suprema, kaugnay sa legalidad ng Presidential Proclamation 572 na bumabaw sa amnestiya ng senador.

Ayon kay Chief of Staff Carlito Galvez Jr., na SC ang may hawak sa

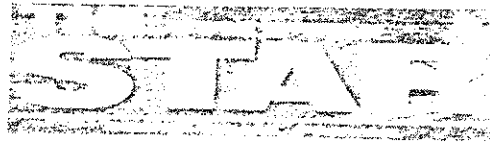
kase ni Trillanes at hindi muna sila magkokomento rito, subalit pinabulaanan na nagkakaroon ng pagkakahatihan at kaguluhan sa AFP.

Tiniyak ni Galvez sa publike na mananatiling nagkakaisa at matibay ang kanilang organisasyon sabay nagbabata sa kanilang mga miyembro o grupo na nagtatangkang maghasik ng kaguluhan sa AFP sa

pamamagitan ng mga intriga sa kanilang mga opisyal at enlisted personnel.

Pinaalalahanan din niya ang bawat, sundalo, airmen, sailor at marine na huwag makisawsaw o maging bahagi ng partisan politics dahil ang kanilang loyalty ay sa Constitution.

Inatasan din ni Galvez ang kasundatuhan na sumunod sa rule of law at sundin ang chain of commands at ang sinumang lalabag sa kautusan ay mananagot habang ang bawat personnel naman na masasangkot dito ay kaagad masisibak sa pwesto ang imbestigahan. -Gemma Garcia- 2



Administration destabilizing itself - LP senators

The Duterte administration is the one destabilizing itself by its failure to stem the rising prices of basic commodities and ensure a stable supply of rice while flouting the rule of law, Sen. Francis Pangilinan said yesterday.

"The opposition does not have to do anything. On its own, either by its incompetence or corruption, the government is doing a good job of destabilizing itself," he declared.

Pangilinan, Liberal Party president, described

Duterte's accusation of the opposition causing destabilization as 'downright false' and "ridiculous," adding that his party is committed to adhering to constitutional processes in pushing for its advocacies and does not believe that ousting the country's leaders would address urgent problems.

"We already ousted presidents twice. If that was the solution to our problems, we should be a first world country by now," he pointed out.

The lawmaker stressed

that all Malacañang has to do to address the current inflation woes is to listen to its own allies who, like the opposition, are calling for the resignation of officials of the Department of Agriculture and the National Food Authority for causing the rice crisis.

He added that instead of throwing baseless accusations at LP and the opposition, the government should listen to the cry of the people and focus on rising prices of goods and lack of jobs

Turn to Page 2

Administration

From Page 1

that would sufficiently provide for the average Filipino family.

Vice President Leni Robredo also debunked yesterday Duterte's accusation that the LP, which she chairs, is part of an alleged plot to oust him.

"We have no connection with the Communist Party of the Philippines, we don't have any kind of conversation with them. We know the role of the CPP in our society—they exist independently of any political party. We have different beliefs," Robredo said.

Duterte's accusations came after LP officials, including Robredo, expressed their support for Trillanes, whose amnesty was nullified by the President through Proclamation 572 signed on Aug. 31.

Robredo maintained the revocation of Trillanes' amnesty "is clearly an attempt to silence the opposition."

"For me, whoever is the victim of abuse of power, we are one with him," said Robredo who visited Trillanes last Thursday at the Senate, where he has been staying after the proclamation was issued.

The President in a speech in Davao on Saturday said a supposed oust Duterte movement "will go into a high gear" next month.

Robredo lamented that the LP had been the usual whipping boy of the administration to deflect the blame for its "incompetencies."

"It's like blaming US President Donald Trump for the weakening economy. The Liberal Party is always the one to blame for all the shortcomings of this administration. I think this is not right," she said.
— Paolo Romero,
Helen Flores

OUST-DUTERTE PLOT BASELESS — LP

THE Liberal Party (LP) on Sunday branded as baseless a claim of President Rodrigo Duterte that the opposition, together with the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), is plotting to oust him.

Sen. Francis Pangilinan, LP president, said there was no truth to

Duterte's allegation, adding that the party remains faithful to the Philippine Constitution.

"That is not true and [is] baseless, we believe in all the processes of the Constitution," Pangilinan said in a radio interview aired over dzMM.

The LP president was responding to

the President's earlier allegation that the "Yellows," the members of LP and the communists are conniving to kick him out of Malacañang.

Duterte called on the public to watch out for the groups, including Sen. Antonio Trillanes 4th, saying the oust-Duterte plot is expected to

escalate in October.

But according to Pangilinan, the LP does not believe in extra-constitutional moves and would not support them.

"If removing a sitting President is an effective solution to the problems of the country, the Philippines should

► BaselessA2

Oust-Duterte plot baseless — LP

have been a First World country by now for ousting two Presidents already," he pointed out.

Then-Presidents Ferdinand Marcos and Joseph Estrada were removed by popular uprisings.

The LP president said what the country really needs is the strict implementation of policies that could address the problems that the nation has been facing.

Since the Duterte administration took over, Pangilinan added, it has always blamed the LP every time there is a blunder in its running of the country.

"The accusation of destabilization is downright false. It is ridiculous. Dissent is not desta-

bilization. Every time scandals and controversies hound this administration whether [they] be corruption issues or issues of incompetent governance, it blames the opposition," Pangilinan said in a statement.

Instead of throwing baseless accusations at the LP and the opposition, the government should focus on the rising prices of goods and lack of jobs.

Pangilinan particularly cited the rice crisis that he said resulted from the incompetence of the National Food Authority (NEA).

When the Aquino administration stepped down in 2016, he said, the growth rate of the coun-

try's agriculture was at 3.5 percent but in the last two years there was almost no growth in the sector.

"If the President doesn't want to listen to the opposition, that's fine but his own allies are sounding the alarm bells. Malacañang should heed the clamor of its own allies and act decisively to solve the rice crisis," Pangilinan added.

Also on Sunday, Vice President Maria Leonor Robredo said the LP to which she belongs is not working in alliance with the CPP or Trillanes' group to destabilize the Duterte administration.

Robredo clarified that the LP, of which she is chairman — has not formed an alliance or is negotiat-

ing with the CPP to topple the Duterte administration.

"We do not have any connection with the CPP, not even other means of interaction. We already know that the CPP exists independently of any political party. A lot of our beliefs are not the same," she said in a radio interview.

Rep. Gary Alejano of party-list Magdalo, who visited Trillanes on Sunday, also denied Duterte's accusations.

"There [are no talks] like that. If we talked to the Liberal Party, it is only because we are the opposition," he said in a news conference.

Booting out Duterte knows neither ideology nor color, and anyone can participate in such movement, exiled CPP founder Jose Maria "Joma" Sison said also on Sunday.

According to Sison, the President is "feeling the pressure" from Filipinos and the broad masses against his "tyranny, corruption and insanity."

"There is no ideological check on those who participate in the broad united front and the mass movement. The most important thing is that they are patriotic enough to fight for the ouster of Duterte," the communist leader said in a message to reporters.

Sison also claimed that several officers and enlisted personnel from the Armed Forces of the Philippines have been against Duterte.

"They are just waiting for the moment when the mass protests reach a certain scale and level of intensity," he added.

**JEFFERSON ANTIPORDA,
DEMPSEY REYES
AND GLEE JALEA**

NPA officer arrested

By JOSEPH JUBELAG

KORONADAL CITY, SOUTH COTABATO – Authorities are on heightened alert following the arrest of a medical officer of the New People's Army (NPA) here on Saturday.

Supt. Marvin Dua-dua, spokesperson of the South Cotabato police, said they have been on alert for a possible retaliation from the communist rebel group after the arrest of Maria Liwanag Fernandez, the regional medical officer of the NPA-Far South Mindanao Regional

Committee, by police and military intelligence operatives in Barangay General Paulino Santos.

Fernandez is facing kidnapping and serious illegal detention charges in connection with the abduction of Sgt. Solaiman Calocop and Pfc. Samuel Garay, both members of 39th Infantry Battalion, NPA rebels in Barangay Telefas, Columbio, Sultan Kudarat, on February 2, 2017.

The abducted soldiers were later freed after a month of captivity in Davao del Sur.

Police said Fernandez yielded an M-203 rifle grenade and improvised explosive device.

The military tagged the suspect as one of the ranking official of the NPA-FSMRC and the niece of Bubu Fernandez, the deputy secretary-general of the NPA-FSMRC operating in Central Mindanao.

Dua-dua said the arrest of Fernandez was a big loss to the NPA rebel group.

"We're expecting a possible retaliation from communist rebels after the arrest of Fernandez," Dua-dua said.

He said police and military units in the province have been directed to closely monitor the movement of NPA and its allied organizations for possible counter measures.

SKETCHES

ANA MARIE PAMINTUAN

Bright idea

His "quite bright" solicitor general did the research, but it's "presidential prerogative" to void the amnesty granted to Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV. President Duterte said this Saturday amid speculation that he was feeding Jose Calida to the wolves for cooking up a reason to put their common nemesis back in detention.



With Duterte taking full responsibility for his own proclamation, it looks like Calida remains in the President's good graces.

The voiding of Trillanes' amnesty was looking like a disastrous miscalculation when Duterte casually identified the person who concocted the scheme. And as everyone suspected, it was Calida, the most powerful solicitor general since Estelito Mendoza.

Duterte's "outing" of his government's chief lawyer came amid rumors that his security forces had refused to enforce his order to arrest Trillanes.

The outing came at the end of a bad week during which inflation hit a nine-year-high, the peso took a beating and the stock market fell together with Duterte's trust rating (although still "very good") in the second quarter survey that was taken *before* all of the bad news emerged.

Duterte's proclamation, dated Aug. 31, was published in a newspaper and became public knowledge only on Sept. 4 - the same day that Trillanes' Senate committee was scheduled to conduct an inquiry into the multimillion-peso contracts in several government agencies that were bagged by a company owned by Calida, his wife and children.

The probe pushed through anyway. Trillanes then holed out in the Senate while Duterte enjoyed Israel and Jordan. Because of the circumstances, Calida was the only person whose name kept cropping up as the likely architect of Presidential Proclamation 572.

As Trillanes presented documents, video footage and photographs disputing the premises for the voiding of his amnesty, the military risked losing much of the public respect it has built up in recent years as its officials claimed they could not find the documents in their files.

To be fair, anyone who has visited a typical government office and seen the piles of documents scattered everywhere can actually believe that vital papers can be misplaced.

Perhaps the military's record keepers thought Trillanes' papers were no longer as vital after the president at the time, Noyon Aquino, granted the amnesty to all those who participated in the Oakwood mutiny, the Manila Peninsula siege and the standoff at the Marine headquarters.

After all, who ever thought that an amnesty would be revoked?

Calida did.

Let's hear it from Duterte, who talked about it upon returning to the country early Saturday from his shortened visit to Jordan: "Look, I am here to enforce the law. It was Calida who did all the research on Trillanes' amnesty, just like what he did to Sereno. You know, Calida is quite bright. If the solicitor general says there's a mistake and it has to be corrected, I cannot refuse."

Was Duterte praising his "quite bright" solicitor general, or preparing to make Calida take the heat for the backlash over the amnesty?

It will probably depend on the outcome of the petition Trillanes filed before the Supreme Court, challenging Proclamation 572, which declared the senator's amnesty void from the start.

Can the president of the republic do this? The Constitution is clear on the president's power to grant amnesty and pardon, but is silent on revocation.

Critics point out that an amnesty is absolute and irrevocable, and erases the offenses for which it was granted. Unlike pardon, which requires a conviction by the courts, amnesty can be granted even before conviction or even an indictment or court-martial. So that case against Trillanes before the Makati regional trial court should have been erased by the amnesty, and the RTC can no longer order his arrest. Neither can he be ordered arrested by a military court.

Duterte's solicitor general, of course, is arguing that there is nothing to revoke since the amnesty was invalid from the start. So the cases against Trillanes remain and he can be arrested.

Calida used a similar argument in the quo warranto petition on the appointment of Maria Lourdes Sereno as chief justice. Eight of Sereno's Supreme Court peers happily agreed, short-circuiting the impeachment process under the Constitution.

Trillanes and his supporters have held back on their previous criticisms of the eight justices. Instead he and his supporters have publicly expressed optimism that Teresita de Castro's Supreme Court would rule fairly in his case.

As of the weekend, however, it seemed like wishful thinking; the buzz in legal circles was that the SC would toss out Trillanes' petition. The basis for the dismissal, according to the grapevine, would be the "missing" signed application for amnesty and admission of guilt, with the burden of producing the documents to be placed on Trillanes.

Duterte added yet another argument when he cited presidential prerogative in voiding an amnesty proclamation.

If Trillanes loses his amnesty, it should put other rebels, including members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and Communist Party of the Philippines, on notice that like any contract with the Philippine government, there is no security in an amnesty proclamation.

After the quo warranto case used to oust a chief justice in record time, the amnesty issue reinforces the anything-goes rule of the jungle in this country.

Joseph Estrada, during his aborted presidency, had the most accurate reading of the state of the nation: whether in politics or law, it's "weather-weather lang."

AS A MATTER OF FACT

SARA SOLIVEN DE GUZMAN

It's about time we have a Department of Disaster Resilience

During his third State of the Nation Address, President Duterte mentioned the creation of a new department that would focus on disaster management. In a tropical country like ours, an archipelago that welcomes typhoons from the Pacific and an active member of the Ring of Fire, we definitely need a strong team to manage the deadly disasters that come our way.

The President called Congress to create a Department of Disaster Resilience. He said he wants a "truly empowered department characterized by a unity of command, science-based approach and full-time focus on natural hazards and disasters, and the wherewithal to take charge of disaster risk reduction; preparedness and response; with better recovery and faster rehabilitation."

Tomorrow, September 11 is the scheduled debate in the Plenary. The House of Representatives under the leadership of Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo acted right away on the legislative measure. House Bill 8165 was passed for the creation of the Department of Disaster Resilience. The version of the House Bill, which underwent intensive deliberations of the joint committees on Government Reorganization and National Defense and final approval by the Committee on Appropriation with a proposed initial budget of P21-billion was presented during the Plenary at the House of Representatives on September 5, 2018.

After it passes the second reading, this Bill co-authored and signed by 157 Congressmen will be transmitted to the Senate. It will then be tackled with the counterpart Senate Bill, which I hope is equally impressive.

According to Representative Joey Salceda (one of the principal authors), the bill actually began with the "sunset review" of the NDRRMC Act of 2010 a provision under the same law. It began in earnest in 2015 until 2016, which was the basis for the initial draft. The technical working group (TWG) of the House Committees engaged stakeholders in 6 TWG meetings, 3 Committee hearings, 2 writeshops and 14 regional consultations with 1,600 LGUs.

After reading the approved version of the bill on the creation of the Department of Disaster Resilience Committee Report 842 signed by Representatives Amado Espino Jr. (Chairperson, Committee on National Defense), Xavier D. Romualdo (Committee on Government Reorganization) and Karlo B. Nograles (Chairperson, Committee on Appropriations), I felt that finally, the House is doing something to address our disaster woes.

Under the law, it is proposed that the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Administration (PAGASA), and the Philippine Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) of DOST will be moved into the DRR as attached agencies, whereas the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) of DND, Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) of DILG, Geohazards Division of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) of DENR, Health and Emergency Management Bureau (HEMB) of DOH, and Disaster Response Assistance and Management Bureau (DREAMB) of DSWD will be under the new department. Of course, DOST Secretary Fortunato dela Peña rejected the proposal and threatened to resign if the two agencies (PAGASA & Phivolcs) under the DOST will be transferred. Disappointed with the opposition, Salceda said that "Climate and disaster threats have more force than Dela Peña's personal threat."

House Bill 8165 key provisions are written in the last page of Committee Report 842 and contain a lot of best practices on Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation. It



is not just about disaster response and recovery but contains a lot of provisions for building disaster resilience through anticipatory planning.

I was also pleased to see the following provisions: 1) Incorporation of internationally accepted principles of disaster risk and vulnerability reduction and management; 2) Ensurance of a science-based approach in a whole-of-society approach; 3) Promotion and advancement of a comprehensive Disaster Risk and Vulnerability Reduction Plan; 4) Development, maintenance and ensurance of climate geospatial information and services to the public through Open Data; 5) Measures on gender, disability and vulnerability sensitive and cultural sensitive practices with recognition of indigenous knowledge systems; 6) Recognition and strengthening of the capacities of LGUs as well as decentralized powers, responsibilities and resources at the regional and local levels; 7) Adoption of comprehensive, integrated and responsive disaster risk reduction efforts that adheres to transparency, accountability and other principles of good governance; 8) Mainstreaming of information to barangay level; 9) Adherence to the principle of building better forward; 10) Ensurance of the use of advanced science and most-up-to-date technologies and management through engagement and consultation; 11) Ensurance of worker's rights; 12) Establishment of a National Loss and Damage Registry; 13) Adherence to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); 14) Adoption of Risk Transfer Mechanisms; 15) Probabilistic Risk Assessment, which is necessary for anticipatory planning; 16) Magna Carta that ensures hazards pay for our frontline disaster practitioners; and 17) Mainstreaming of gender and social inclusion in all aspects of the Department of Disaster resilience work from planning, monitoring to evaluation.

One of the best that I saw in the document was the "employment with regular funding of academe or higher education institutions, such as the University of the Philippines Nationwide Operational Assessment of Hazards Center." Establishing partnership with the academe will surely keep this department in tow. I'm also happy to note that Congress heeded to the public's clamor to re-establish Project NOAH hailed by the international community as one of the best in the world for disaster resilience, big data analytics and use of high-technology for disaster response plans.

Here's hoping that during the sessions, key provisions will not be stricken out by lobbyists and that the bill will be passed right away. Our country urgently needs the creation of a single Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-like department, a concerted effort by government with a point person who will be answerable to the President in times of crisis.

Among the political detractors of President Digong, Senator Antonio Trillanes may be the most vilified in social media, but the latest move of the Palace in revoking his amnesty granted by former President PNoy may have brought him a number of sympathizers. Some of his haters even made Facebook posts expressing concern for him as if he had become a martyr overnight. Except for the swollen eye bags presumably due to lack of sleep, the former soldier appears unperturbed as he even warned that the AFP will do what is legal and moral.

This may be the third of a series of events befalling government personalities critical to the present administration. First, there was the story of "De Lima's Dilemma," which unraveled in dramatic fashion at a congressional inquiry on the drug trade in the national penitentiary. This was followed by the story of "The Fall of the Lady who Divided Faura," where a Chief Justice, unwanted by the department she heads, was unceremoniously ousted.

Now, we are about to witness the third tale we may call "Amnesty Revoked: *Ibalik si Antonio sa Kulungan*," which a friend describes as a scene straight from the hit TV series "Aug Probinsyano" - very unrealistic but is happening right before our eyes. From the viewpoint of a layperson, how could a former soldier, who is about to finish his second term as elected senator of the Republic, be reverted to his former status as a military officer to face a court martial?

Will the Commander-in-Chief and the military have more patience in waiting for the Senator to come out of his hole, or the issuance of an arrest warrant from the civil or military court, or the resolution of his application for a Temporary Restraining Order? Or will the Senator find a way to a nearby five-star hotel for a déjà vu? *Abangan!*

COMMONSENSE

MARICHU A. VILLANUEVA

Unending word war

After ending his word war with former American president Barack Obama with a public apology last week while he was on a state visit in Israel, President Rodrigo Duterte kicked dusts anew at the expense of incumbent United States President Donald Trump. It's not as if taking side on this issue but the unfiltered mouth of President Duterte is again taking him into yet another troubled relationship with the US leadership.



At the end of his shortened state visit to Jordan last Friday, President Duterte pointed to Trump's tariff policy against products from China as among the sources of international pressures that have fueled a steep rising of inflation in the Philippines. For the past three consecutive months, the national average of inflation rate in the Philippines have gone up beyond projections of Duterte economic managers.

"Inflation is because of Trump. When Trump raised (US) tariff and banned other items, things went haywire," the Chief Executive told the OPW community. He, however, assuaged them his economic managers are wracking their brains on how to curb the further rise of inflation.

"I am not apologizing. There is really inflation and we are trying to control it," the former Davao City Mayor said.

He clarified he is not making excuses but argued every President of the country, not just him, went through inflation problems during their respective watch.

This was after inflation hit a nine-year record high of 6.4% in August, faster than the 2.6% recorded of the same month last year. It was also faster than the 5.7% recorded last July. Duterte economic managers attributed the record-high inflation in August to higher electricity, gas, fuels, fish, rice, personal transport, vegetables and meat prices.

Earlier, the Duterte economic managers admitted that higher prices could be attributed to a certain degree to the impact of the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Law that took effect in January this year. However, they argued TRAIN impact accounted only for 0.7% of the 5.7% July inflation rate and that its effect would only be a temporary blip. But they blamed the rest of the inflationary factors as largely influenced by the unexpected oil price crisis in the global market and the peso-dollar fluctuations.

Speaking before the overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in Jordan, President Duterte apparently spilled out the beans that his economic managers have not publicly spoken on what has been pushing up the prices of basic goods and services in our country. Saying he was not avoiding the

Or, is it the aftermath of President Duterte's raging "word war" with former rebel soldier-turned politician Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV?

backlash for the rising prices of goods, President Duterte blurted out Trump's tariff policy has something to do with the rising commodity prices.

Repeatedly admitting his little knowledge on the economics subject in the past, President Duterte could not say or explain how the Trump tariff policy on Chinese products affected the Philippines. The US slapped tariffs on several Chinese goods because of the alleged intellectual property violations of China, a major trading partner of both the US and the Philippines. A large chunk of imported goods from China are agricultural products that are being sold in Philippine markets.

In his press conference at Davao City international airport upon arrival last Saturday, President Duterte anew pointed to Trump's tariff policy as having pushed prices up in our markets to a large extent. Obviously, President Duterte could not care less if Trump who is his *besbie* – to borrow the popular word for "best friend" used by youngsters – might not take his jab on his US tariff policy in good light.

During the same press conference in Davao City, Mayor Duterte disclosed though he intends to call up and talk with the US President whom he called as "Pareng Trump" for possible purchase of weapons and other firearms from the US for the use of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP).

According to him, he came up with his planned talks with Trump while watching a demonstration in a military training facility in Jordan. "*Mag-usap pa kami ni pareng Trump kasi... I have - wala ako, I have nothing against the American people, not the slightest even mis-giving kay Trump,*" the President pointed out.

This was a complete turnaround from his previous adamant stance against too much dependence on the US for the military equipment requirements of the AFP and the PNP.

Just a month ago, President Duterte frothed in the mouth in anger when a visiting American sub-Cabinet official cautioned the Philippine government from its reported plans to procure weapons from Russia. In his emotional outburst in public anew, Mayor Duterte bared a letter sent to him by three Trump Cabinet officials – US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Defense Secretary James Mattis and Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross – telling him that US weapons and other defense equipment are beneficial to both interests of the Philippines and the US.

Then President Duterte repeated supposed possible assassination attempts or plots to oust him being allegedly engineered by unnamed elements in the US Central Intelligence Agency. ¶

Could this sudden turnabout in planned US arms purchase got something to do with rumored rumbblings within the AFP?

President Duterte has acknowledged in public there are indeed pro-US sentiments within the rank of the AFP and the PNP – the US being a traditional and historical ally of the Philippines.

Or, is it the aftermath of President Duterte's raging "word war" with former rebel soldier-turned politician Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV?

Following the withdrawal of amnesty grant that President Duterte issued under Proclamation 572 before he left the country last week, Trillanes is facing possible reopening of his rebellion and other criminal cases against him and his arrest and detention.

As the Commander-in-chief of the AFP and the PNP, President Duterte should not allow his personal war with Trillanes to cloud his decisions. Meanwhile, their word war is getting uglier.

GOTCHA

JARIUS BONDOC

Political crisis looms from Trillanes standoff

Multiple constitutional issues can be raised against the deployment of state might to arrest Sen. Antonio Trillanes. Already at the Supreme Court are three. First is if President Rodrigo Duterte by himself can rescind Trillanes' 2011 amnesty by the then-President and Congress. That amnesty was for Trillanes' mutinies as a Navy lieutenant in 2003 and 2007. Second, on due process, is if he was given a chance to defend the questioned amnesty at all. Duterte's voiding of the amnesty, quickly followed by police-military posses to get Trillanes, was sprung in surprise while the former was on a foreign trip. Third, on equal protection of law, is Trillanes' being singled out for harassment because of opposition to Duterte's administration. For, dozens of fellow-mutineers then underwent the same amnesty process that Duterte now deems invalid. Yet they are not being hunted down. Duterte's appointees among them have even been reposted despite recent criminal charges for unrelated offenses.

Other constitutional questions can be about supposed unfound defense department records as justification for Trillanes' arrest. As well, the confirmation that it was the Solicitor General, whom he presently is investigating for graft, who researched the amnesty. And the flurry of cases now being filed against Trillanes by Duterte appointees and relatives just to have arrest warrants against him. Trillanes has not seen the end of it.

Those questions will try the mettle of the Supreme Court at a very critical time in its life. It is under a Chief Justice newly picked by Duterte. That high post had become vacant when, by 8-6 vote, the justices ousted the former CJ by quo warranto, or position void from the start. It came after an attempt to first impeach that CJ at the House of Representatives. There, five of the eight justices who later voted for ouster had even testified against the CJ. Then the quo warranto case was raised at the SC for the testifiers to themselves judge the CJ. The Solicitor General who filed that quo warranto case is the same one who now prepared the case against Trillanes. Duterte himself reminded one and all of that fact, upon his return from abroad Saturday. As his spokesmen often remind, he does not make casual, only deliberate, statements. Duterte himself had wanted that past CJ out for opposing

his bloody war on drugs. That the SC did remove the CJ, though for other reasons, had earned it jeers as an alleged enforcer of Duterte.

The test before the SC is like the one put before the new Ombudsman picked too by Duterte. Handed to him upon assumption into office was a Malacañang recommendation to fire the Overall Deputy Ombudsman. The reason for that desired sacking is the gall of the Deputy not only to talk about but actually investigate Duterte's alleged multibillion-peso secret bank deposits. That matter had been brought to the Office of the Ombudsman by none other than the same pesky oppositionist Trillanes. The previous Ombudsman had refused to dismiss the Deputy on Malacañang's same request. Only the independent constitutional office can discipline its Deputy, not the Executive. The Supreme Court had so ruled as far back as 2014. The new Ombudsman came from the present SC. He was among the eight justices who voted to oust the immediate past CJ. Malacañang wants from him action on a parallel matter that now confronts the SC.

The issues somehow have been joined. And the nature of the issues precariously is political. Thus there can be no full satisfactory resolution. The SC ruling on Trillanes can in fact lead to crisis.

Even Duterte is hinting of that somewhat. He says there is a conspiracy of "the 'yellows', the Trillanes forces, and the Politburo" to push him out by October. He refers to the immediate past ruling Liberal Party, with military loyalists of Trillanes, and Communist rebels. Such cabal may be perceived as unlikely: the communists hate the "yellow LP" leader, former President Noynoy Aquino. And Trillanes has been deriding Duterte for releasing from prison communist leaders whom the military took years and cost lives to track down. ||

Whatever, any prolonged political fighting can worsen the plight of ordinary Filipinos. Their concern is food, jobs, and peace – from which national leaders apparently are distracted.

Catch *Sapol* radio show, Saturdays, 8-10 a.m., DWIZ (882-AM).

Gotcha archives on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Jarius-Bondoc/1376602159218459>, or The STAR website <https://beta.philstar.com/columns/134276/gotcha>

★

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Legal anarchy in the horizon

The political drama unfolding in our country is generating a whole lot more of agitated emotion compared to any action-thriller movie showing in cinemas today.

President Duterte's proclamation nullifying the amnesty given to Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV eight years ago has stirred up a hornet's nest of outrage. Social media is full of angry posts that begin with "I'm not a fan (or supporter) of Trillanes, but..." The posts go on to lambast the Duterte administration with unprintable tirades.

Others manage to channel their rage by coming up with memes that mock the amnesty nullification with ridiculous analogies. The President declared "void ab initio" the amnesty given to the senator supposedly because his application for amnesty cannot be located. Netizens sarcastically ask: If your application for a marriage license can no longer be located, will that make you single again? If your application for a birth certificate can no longer be located, will that make you a nonexistent person?

The President seeks the arrest of Trillanes evidently to punish the opposition senator for his incessant attacks and to try to silence him, a repeat of what has been done to another opposition senator, Leila de Lima.

The Duterte administration may have assessed that the arrest of Trillanes will generate protests that are within its power to manage, just like in the case of De Lima. The government probably thinks the initial howls of dissent will eventually simmer, and the people will ultimately become nonchalant to the reality of another opposition senator in jail.



FLEA MARKET OF IDEAS

JOEL RUIZ BUTUYAN

The President terribly miscalculates.

Mr. Duterte has achieved for Trillanes what the latter has been trying to attain for the past two years: widespread public empathy for the senator's sustained opposition of, and highly critical stance against, the President. From the time Mr. Duterte assumed the presidency, Trillanes has been the biggest thorn in his side. The senator has accused the President of crimes such as acting as protector of drug lords, and unexplained wealth that runs into the hundreds of millions.

Somehow, the crusade of Trillanes has not gained much traction in terms of public support, notwithstanding the fact that the charges he has hurled against the President are based on plausible circumstances, and despite the fact that Trillanes has been the most fearless among the voices of defiance. The senator's stern demeanor and stiff jowl deprive him of charisma, which would otherwise easily attract extensive supporters to his causes.

But two reasons have worked to make it different for Trillanes this time.

First, there is very serious grumbling among the people because of the worsening economy. And the public's foul mood has been primed by the President's blasphemous attacks against God and the Catholic Church, his profanities, and his excessive friendliness with China despite the latter's occupation of our territories in the West Philippine Sea.

If the ruling government thinks it can arrest Trillanes as a means to distract people and to instill fear among leaders who foment mass protests, it has committed a major blunder. The opposite result has been achieved. Mr. Duterte has unwittingly crowned Trillanes as the rallying figure of all opposition forces and enthroned him as the symbol of the people's discontent.

Second, the reason used to justify the nullification of Trillanes' amnesty is revolting even to ordinary people, that's why viral memes abound ridiculing it. It's degrading to even exert effort to explain why it's preposterous.

The power to declare a completed government act as "void ab initio" exclusively belongs to the judiciary. If our courts declare that the president has coequal power to make "void ab initio" declarations, what is there to prevent President Duterte from proclaiming that the 1987 Constitution is void ab initio because the ballots cast by the people who ratified the same no longer exist?

Legal anarchy and de facto dictatorship loom large in the horizon.

Comments to fleamarketofideas@gmail.com

BUSINESS BEAT

The end is near



By MELITO SALAZAR JR.

HISTORY tells us that the end of a regime is marked by economic and social chaos as the ruling class holds on to power by trying to decimate the opposition or stage "shows" to divert the people's attention from their daily problems. The attempt of the Duterte administration to void the amnesty granted to Senator Trillanes by President Benigno Aquino III and Congress is a desperate move by an administration that knows time

is running out.

The anti-drug campaign is not succeeding as huge amounts of shabu are still coming in, reflective of a failed strategy that targeted addicts rather than the big suppliers. The anti-corruption drive is catching top officials who are allowed to fade away rather than be charged in court. Some are resurrected in other government positions. It is coincidental that the arrest order for Senator Trillanes is issued as he presides in a Senate hearing on how Solicitor General Jose Calida's family security agency

has bagged millions in contracts with government agencies.

Recent statements of President Rodrigo Duterte bolster the belief that he is getting tired and frustrated of running the government. Yet he can not step down because he does not want his constitutional successor, Vice President Leni Robredo, to take over. Whatever his musings, the military will not succumb to any succession moves that are unconstitutional. The only way is to have the Presidential Electoral Tribunal which is also the Supreme

Court, within the 41 days of the term of a chief justice whose previous votes in the Supreme Court have favored the Marcos family or have been consistent with the wishes of the President, come up with a decision finding Senator Bongbong Marcos as the rightful winner of the vice-presidential elections. Then President Duterte and the country can finally have a sorely needed rest.

To prevent any opposition to this plan, Senator Trillanes must be imprisoned, joining the only other vocal senator, Lella de Lima. Conveniently all his accusations of the Duterte bank accounts (easy for the President to dispute charges by issuing an authorisation for all banks in the Philippines to reveal his bank accounts and balances), association of Duterte family in smuggling, corruption of top officials like Solicitor General Jose Calida will be silenced. We have seen how the guards of Senator De Lima will cough in unison to

drown out her statements. Will there be any senators as brave as these two to aggressively fight the Duterte administration and risk imprisonment?

Even media seems to be walking on egg shells. In the case of the amnesty, many accepted the presidential proclamation as voiding the amnesty when it should have been properly reported as an attempt to void the amnesty. How many in media carried the statement of former President Benigno Aquino III? Have the Duterte attacks and threats against the media finally succeeded in toning down the media coverage of the opposition?

Yet the best of plans can fail. The daily struggles as inflation adds to the misery of the people will force the administration to hold off these political moves. It must deal with the economy. Otherwise the end will not just be near. It will be the end. ||

Editorial

Why Duterte's visit to Israel matters

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte's state visit to Israel is a very important diplomatic initiative and a good platform to build on for the future. Against the backdrop of volatile Middle East politics, the significance of the state visit lies in what an active Israeli-Filipino relationship can creatively develop and foster.

We hope that 24 hours after the President's return to the Philippines, the nation and members of his entourage have had enough time to reflect on and digest what they have learned from this important journey.

Let's begin with the dollar values, which we unimaginatively tend to employ in evaluating a presidential trip abroad (many think the nation should get its money's worth from these expensive visits to foreign places). Presidential communications have reported the following results from the visit to Israel:

1. The Philippines secured \$82.9 million in investment deals and pledges from the trip. The deals, which were signed by Filipino and Israeli businessmen, cover investments in technology, military hardware, transportation and tourism.

In his speech during the signing of the agreements, Duterte vowed to provide a conducive investment climate to foreign investors. "There will be no corruption. There will be no harassment, no nothing. It's an ordinary day-to-day government business that you have to follow."

2. The two countries renewed warm relations that date back to World War II, when the Philippines extended refuge and support to thousands of Jews reeling from the barbarism of Nazi Germany.

3. During Duterte's visit, the two countries signed four agreements on science, labor, trade and joint oil exploration.

4. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu took the opportunity to commend the work of some 28,000 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) there, most of them caregivers. Netanyahu commended their dedication to their jobs and quality of service. Israel pays the highest salaries for similar jobs in other parts of the Middle East.

What gives the bilateral relationship so much promise is the potential hard-edged learning that the Philippines can derive in the areas of national security and economic development.

Israel is a legend in the defense and security front. It was attacked seven times in the first 62 years of its existence as a nation and subjected to comprehensive diplomatic and economic embargoes. Yet they have overcome their attackers' quantitative superiority of weapons through courage and technology and superior military skills and cohesiveness.

Secondly, Israel is an economic miracle in its own right. With only 7.1 million people, no natural resources, enemies on every border, and in a constant state of war, Israel has become the 32nd largest economy in the world by nominal gross domestic product (GDP) as of last year. The country benefits from a highly skilled workforce and is among the most educated countries in the world, with one of the highest percentages of its citizens holding a tertiary education degree.

Israel has the highest standard of living in the Middle East, and has one of the highest life expectancies in the world.

The Philippines is no slouch in the world today; but it can learn a lot from the example of Israel in terms of security and managing the economy.

Perhaps more than anything, Israel is a lesson on what creativity can do, it has bred creativity proportionate to its small size and the dangers that it has faced.

Creativity on the security front has turned it into a strong nation (perhaps secretly nuclear-powered). Creativity on the economic front has made it a highly developed country that continues to break barriers.

One particular piece of information is striking. Israel has produced more start-up companies than most developed countries have done. The country is hailed today as a laboratory of innovation and entrepreneurship.

It has more companies on the Nasdaq composite index than Korea, Japan, Singapore, China, India and all of Europe combined.

If we want lessons from anyone on how to make our country more secure, and how to develop our country's vast potential, Israel may be the best case study.

Watch out: These events can change our future!

WHILE the current China-US trade war is due to turn more intense in the next few weeks with another round of additional levies on Chinese goods into the American market, other developments in our Asia-Pacific region in the past—and this—must be closely monitored.

Yes because these can impact forcefully—geopolitically and economically—on our intermediate and long-term futures. A military field commander's miscalculation or judgment error may even lead to a third world war between China and the US at the worst, which nobody wants now.

In the past week, international reports revealed China had launched the blue water trial runs of its second aircraft carrier, which will join the Liaoning in active service next month.

To a number of analysts, this is no surprise following President Xi Jinping's statement in last year's general assembly of the ruling Chinese Communist Party that by the centennial of the party's founding China will be the world's top superpower.

Last week, Japan's Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera was quoted by AFP: "China has been rapidly improving its military strength and... unilaterally escalating its military activities in the sea and aviation spaces around our country."

He was also reported to have said Russia is also increasing its military activities, including military exercises in the disputed Kuril Islands, adding: "We are seeing movement to again push



THE ASEAN PERSPECTIVE

GIL H. SANTOS

forward its military activities in the Far East."

This followed earlier warnings in Washington by US military commanders that China military fortifications and intercontinental ballistic missiles installations in the man-made islands in the South China Sea and what Manila calls the West Philippine Sea are direct threats to the US forces in the Asia-Pacific area now that Beijing's navy—and total military assets—is probably larger than the US in manpower and materiel.

There are only a few establishments where studies of comparative military forces among sovereign nations are available, like the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), the Rand Corporation, the Center for Strategic and International Studies and Jane's Books.

Military expenses, manpower and materiel are generally believed to be deflated by their sovereign states because these are considered related to their national and territorial security. But it is generally accepted that China's two million manpower is the world's most numerous, and the US has the biggest yearly military budget of \$600 billion: China's is second at \$224 billion and bigger than the combined

military expenses of Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand.

The state-owned China Daily has warned the United Kingdom the passage of the British Royal Navy's amphibious transport HMS Abdon close to the Spratlys in the South China Sea (recognized by the UN as international waters open for all navigation) was a "provocation" or aggressive move. It could have "hurt," the newspaper said, the chances of a trade agreement between Beijing and London, which the UK needs after it exits from the European Union.

Another event in Beijing last week was the tri-annual China-Africa summit where Beijing pledged \$126 billion for the One Belt One Road projects on the Dark Continent where lack of infrastructure is the main deterrent to economic development, coupled with a fast-growing population and lack of education/manpower training or skilled labor.

In the pre-summit meeting, Xi conferred separately with the African leaders and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to assure them that China will closely work with the government leaders and the UN to "support" African development, according to the state-controlled Global Times.

He appeared to have convinced the chair of the African Union, Rwanda's President Paul Kagame, that indeed China's One Belt One Road projects will help African economic progress instead of pushing them into "debt traps" with long-term loans from China's

Eximbank at commercial loan rates of interests.

Kagame was quoted by international wire services, as reported by the state-controlled Xinhua news agency, as saying that the debt trap criticisms come from sources who are 'discouraging African-Chinese cooperation...besides these critics give too little (to Africa, compared to China's pledges now)..."

The Africans' position vis-à-vis China is understandable. Most likely, Beijing's "soft diplomatic" offensive is working on them. They are obviously in the same weak economic status that the Philippines was when the Americans imposed their military bases on us (under the Mutual Defense Treaty) almost immediately after the last war and at the surge of the Cold War. The Filipinos had no choice but to accept the onerous one-sided provisions of the pact.

As far as the Filipinos—and most of the Aseans—are concerned, the circumstances of this 21st century and almost 70 years ago, and the stages of our economic developments are different. National priorities also vary.

In Malaysia's case, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad prioritized his country's debts and ability to pay its borrowings. Ergo since China refused to help Kuala Lumpur liquidate its loans first, he recently scrapped the \$22 billion infrastructure offer of Beijing.

Indonesia's Joko Widodo turned his attention first to address the fall of the rupiah as investors were starting to leave Jakarta—the effects of the US-China trade war—instead of increasing the national

loans to cover the rising budgetary deficit due to the external factors. However, no announcement has been made yet on the One Belt One Road project offers by China.

In the Philippines the current bigger problem is the total inflation increase despite the intensified infrastructure program of the administration, employment rise, consumer spending (partly due to the weakened peso-dollar exchange rate), power costs and natural calamities.

The ASEAN members, while individually looking out for their national interests, will have to exert extra efforts to economically integrate faster and smoothly, to insure food and water security for the region of more than 650 million people (and still counting) of varied historical backgrounds, culture, religion (though mostly Muslim) and different stages of economic development.

Tomorrow (Tuesday) two vital international conferences will be held at the same time and dates, September 11 to 13:

The World Economic Forum on Asean in Hanoi, counting as participants some 800 government leaders, civil society groups and media from 12 countries. The initial announcement said President Rodrigo Duterte, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir and Myanmar's State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi will attend.

The scheduled agenda include Asia's new balance of power (obviously considering the emergence of China as the top Asian economy and upcoming as a military rival of the US), Southeast Asia's industri-

alization, the economic outlook of Asia, the Asean economic integration, Asean urbanization and the Fourth Industrial Revolution in the region.

The Russian-hosted summit conference between President Vladimir Putin, China's Xi Jinping, Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and South Korea's Prime Minister Lee Nak-yeon in Vladivostok. North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has reportedly been invited but has not replied, according to the report released by the Chinese in Beijing.

There was no mention of any agenda in the report but presumably it was a Russian initiative to be a mediator in the denuclearization (of North Korea) following the UN sanction on Pyongyang for violating the UN Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty. Both Russia and China voted for the sanction against North Korea last year.

The Hanoi conference should discuss—even on a preliminary basis—the long overdue Code of Conduct on the South China Sea among China and the Asean members because it is central to the territorial disputes between Beijing on one hand, and Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and the Philippines on the other.

China has been delaying the discussion, even on the framework of the Code, for the last 15 years, until its installation of military facilities in the corals and reefs it reclaimed are completed and its military bases there are fully operational.

PS
(Comments and reactions to gilsmanilatimes@yahoo.com)

Trillanes' and Yellows' abuse of Catholic religion as sickening as clerics' widespread sexual abuses

If there's anything the current travails of the farceur of a senator, Antonio Trillanes 4th, has demonstrated to Filipinos, it is the following.



RIGOBERTO D. TIGLAO

The exploitation of the Catholic religion by a group of clerics in that Church in the service of this military mutineer - a Yellow tactic since 1986 - has become so sickening. And as I will argue here, it is in the same genre as the now exposed ignominy of widespread sexual abuse by priests not only of girls but of boys.

► TiglaoA4

Other than scenes of Trillanes' rantings before an incredulous media, the images of this humbug's quagmire have been the following:

— Clerics' "laying of hands" (a superstitious practice in many cultures, that magical rays come out of the priests' hands) on his bowed head;

— Daily Catholic mass at his Senate quarters attended by his sparse crowd of supporters, in which during the sermon in one mass, the priest Noel Gatchalian said he prayed to God to make President Duterte ill so he would die (using the euphemism "*magpahinga na*");

— The handing over to him — I presume to be stationed by his sofa — of a statuette of the so-called "Lady of Peñafrancia," another of the thousand images demonstrating the hidden dominance of the goddess cult in Christianity.

What the pro-Trillanes' clerics are trying to tell Filipinos is essentially this: "We are God's representatives (a belief hammered into Filipinos' consciousness in three centuries of Spanish friar rule), and we know what He wants. The Almighty himself supports Trillanes. If you are Catholics, you have to support Trillanes."

While these clerics have not succeeded at all in getting people to support Trillanes, their very attempt to do so sickens me to my stomach. They have debased the religion which is meant to be a doorway to what is transcendent in human existence.

These political clerics' implicit false claims are also the same lies their colleagues use so they could sexually abuse who knows how many thousands of the young faithful—1,000 documented cases by 300 priests in Philadelphia dioceses recently disclosed—and to hide their crimes for decades.

"I am God's representative on earth, "a priest in some Philadelphia parish and in some *convento* in a Philippine province would have told a young boy or girl, "therefore submit to me your body. Only God may know of this. You will be condemned to eternal fire in Hell, if you tell anybody what I have done."

It is in only in the Philippines though, starting in the late 1980s, that clerics have dabbled in such political exertions. Even in Catholic countries, a clown like priest Roberto Reyes—who mimicks the running of Forest Gump in that eponymous movie to

draw attention to himself—who engages in political theater would have been called out by his superiors and cloistered in some monastery.

Clerics' political involvement here is also unique in that they have been almost exclusively part of the political actions of either the Communist Party of the Philippines, and since 1986, of the Yellow Cult.

This is due to very historical reasons, which explains their persistence.

The idealistic youth of the 1960s and 1970s were drawn to only two ideologies to be their crutches to confront the mostly feudal exploitation in our country in that era.

First was Maoism, since after all Mao Zedong led the successful revolution in the biggest country on earth, and was an inspiration to similar uprisings all over the undeveloped world. Second was the so-called "liberation theology" that emerged in Latin American countries which was essentially the injection of God into Marxist class theory.

In the 1960s to the early 1970s, there were even more liberation-theology activists than Maoists under the wing of the Communist Party led by Jose Ma. Sison. This wasn't surprising really as it was embraced by the rich religious orders like the Jesuits, the Society of the Divine Word, the La Salle Brothers, and Augustinians. They had very enthusiastic activist organizations like Christians for National Liberation, Chi Rho and Lakas Diwa.

When martial law was declared though in 1972, many of their leaders believed the communist propaganda that a cruel fascist organization could be resisted only through armed force, which only the communists had through their New People's Army.

Liberation theology

Many of the liberation theology leaders drifted to the Communist Party, and several even become its top leaders, like the priest who was the crush of not a few activist nuns, Edicio de la Torre, as well as Fr. Luis Jalandoni and his wife Sister Consuelo Ledesma — both scions of the wealthiest sugar landlords in Negros, and Fr. Conrado Balweg, the NPA's top commander in the Cordilleras who would later found the breakaway Cordillera People's Liberation Army. Although a layman, former NDF



Graven image? Trillanes given statuette of 'Our Lady of Peñafrancia' to save him.

chairman Edga Jopson was deep into liberation theology until he joined the communists in 1973 to become one of its top leaders.

It wasn't really too difficult for these religious people to embrace communist ideology. Both actually have the same structure of unquestionable dogmas, a commitment to the poor, and the notions of the inexorable march of history—for the Christians the triumph of the Kingdom of God, for the Maoists the ushering in of a classless society.

The priests-turned-communists became one of the Communist Party's strengths. Their priestly aura weakened the anti-communist caricature of communists as ruthless atheists. They easily managed to infiltrate Catholic schools and build up party cells with colleges like St. Paul's College, to this day becoming a base for communist recruitment of idealistic youth. The outfit that reported human rights abuses during martial law, and padded the figures, was Task Force Detainees organized and funded by the Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines headquartered at St. Joseph's College, which had been a major recruitment area for communists.

With their elite background, they easily convinced middle-class organizations to join the communists in a united front. Thus, former priests De la Torre, Jalandoni and his wife Consuelo were key figures in setting up the National Democratic Front, with the latter two still heading it. It became de rigueur for the communist-led demonstrations to have at the head of the pack their young activists recruited

from the seminaries wearing their soutanes, even if they just had a year in the seminary, both to discourage religious riot police from attacking the crowd and to project an image that even priests were against Marcos.

The Communist Party drew closer to the Yellow Cult in the years leading to Marcos' fall in 1986, with its former cleric-cadres and their fronts ordered to support the opposition. By February 1986, the communists who had become experts in street "agit-prop" theater, managed to convince nuns to carry statuettes of the Virgin Mary and say the rosary while facing the military's tanks during the EDSA uprising.

However, the Yellow Cult, because of Cory Aquino's religiosity, managed to get many of the clerics recruited by the communists to defect to it instead, and to establish its own base in religious organizations.

I suspect though that going by the issues in which the political clerics have been most visible—alleged widespread human rights abuses under President Duterte's term and Trillanes' "persecution"—they are still mostly functioning as the communists' lackeys.

Yet these caricatures of holy men and women are, like the communists, a dying breed. It is so pathetic for Trillanes that they make up much of his supporters, and their snapshots with him the only photos of any worth to be published or broadcast.

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DU30's duty is not to Calida but to himself

WHILE President Rodrigo Duterte was shopping for arms in Israel and Jordan, with an unverified and unidentified party of 400,



FIRST THINGS FIRST
FRANCISCO S. TATAD

inflation in the country hit 6.4 percent, the highest in Southeast Asia, and the country's highest in 10 years. The peso slumped, P53.80 to the US dollar—the lowest in 13 years. These exceeded the most fearful economic forecasts, and were not part of any regional trend. Vietnam's inflation stood at 4.5 percent, Indonesia 3.2 percent, Thailand 1.5 percent, Malaysia 0.9 percent, and Singapore 0.6 percent. All their currencies were reported to be stable.

► TatadA5

In Bicol, where I come from, the inflation rate was reported to be higher than the national average—9 percent. A distressed Bicolano says even their precious *sili*—from the garden-variety plant which Bicolanos famously tie to the ground before they do the same thing to their thatched house whenever a storm threatens—now costs P1,000 per kilogram. Only the birds have unimpeded access to it now. And not even the much-maligned Bicolana Vice President Leni Robredo has anything to do with it.

For rice, which has all but disappeared in the market and is now sold in sachets of 100 grams, instead of by the kilo or the ganta, the inflation rate is 12.5 percent. For corn, which is a staple in Samar and other parts of the Visayas and Mindanao, it is 12.6 percent; for vegetables, it is 19.2 percent; for fish, 12.4 percent; and for sugary goods, 9.1 percent. The threat of mass starvation or famine looks real and tends to intensify as we listen to our Department of Agriculture and National Food Authority officials. They tend to bring back some of our worst memories of the Japanese occupation.

Focus on the problem

These problems, grave as they are, are not without a solution. But no solution will come if the government tries to divert the people's attention away from the problem. Most people I have talked to have no doubt the crisis has already taken a real toll on DU30's "popularity" and on his self-esteem, but they see him doing everything to talk of something else. Thus, we hear him saying certain groups are out to oust him by October, and we see him preoccupied with the effort to have Sen. Antonio Trillanes 4th arrested and jailed.

He has to stay focused on preventing the economy's collapse. He may have to import two million tons of rice to stave off starvation and famine across the country, while firing the top officials of the Department of Agriculture and the National Food Authority, and providing subsidy to the rice farmers who will lose their incomes because of cheap imported rice. And he will have to suspend the TRAIN law in order to eliminate the tax hikes on gasoline, diesel, kerosene and other byproducts, which have sent prices of other commodities shooting past the roof. And he will have to stop talking political nonsense just to keep the nation on edge. No diversionary tactic will work.

A flawed proclamation

Before he left for abroad on his latest trip, he signed Presidential Proclamation 572 declaring null and void *ab initio* the 2010 grant of amnesty to the former Navy lieutenant senior grade-turned senator for his admitted participation

in the July 27, 2003 Oakwood mutiny, the 2006 Marines stand-off in Taguig and the 2007 Peninsula Hotel siege. It was apparently DU30's final response to the senator's persistent allegation that he had stashed an inexplicably large amount in his secret bank accounts.

Presidential Proclamation 75, issued by B. S. Aquino 3rd on November 24, 2010, granted amnesty to 39 former military officers and 53 enlisted men, who had participated in the three above-named incidents, with the full concurrence of a majority of all the members of Congress. No amnesty granted by a President with the concurrence of Congress has been subsequently nullified by another president; were this to happen, it is reasonable to assume that the presidential act revoking the amnesty should have full congressional concurrence. This one is on the say-so of DU30 alone. It appears therefore to be demonstrably unconstitutional.

Proclamation 572 does not seek to nullify the amnesty to 39 former military officers and 53 enlisted men; it singles out Trillanes alone for having allegedly failed to apply for it and to admit his guilt. These are the requisite conditions for the grant of amnesty, which is not the same as a presidential pardon. The latter is unilaterally bestowed by the president, without the recipient applying for it and admitting guilt for his crime/s. This is what happened when President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo pardoned deposed President Joseph Ejercito Estrada for his crime of plunder.

Calida's role

How did we get here?

DU30 says Solicitor General Jose Calida did all the research for his controversial proclamation. We have no reason to doubt it. But what kind of research? Did the conclusion follow the premises, or did the conclusion precede the premises? At the time, Trillanes was poised to open a Senate inquiry into some multi-million peso contracts between some government agencies and a firm allegedly belonging to members of Calida's family for the provision of security services. Did that impact Calida's research?

If the story is to be believed, somebody called the Judge Advocate General's Office, Armed Forces of the Philippines, on August 30, asking for Trillanes' original amnesty papers. He was told the papers were not on public display and would have to be dug up from the files, which would require a little while. This is how the bureaucracy works. But apparently the government was under a tight deadline, so the very next day the President issued Proclamation 572 declaring the grant of amnesty to Trillanes *null and void ab initio* for the reasons earlier stated.

While in Israel, DU30 ordered Trillanes arrested, subjected to a military court martial, and locked up in jail, before he returned home from his latest jaunt. But the evidence failed to support the factual allegations against Trillanes.

False allegations

Contrary to the allegation, Trillanes formally applied for the amnesty and admitted guilt for his crimes. This is certified and sworn to by Voltaire T. Gazmin, Aquino's Secretary of National Defense. The document is accompanied by Gazmin's letter to Aquino dated January 25, 2011, on the status of the officers and men who had applied for

amnesty, and by Trillanes' pledge of allegiance to the Constitution, subscribed and sworn to before Gazmin on January 27, 2011.

A document issued by the Makati Regional Trial Court 148, and signed by acting presiding judge Ma. Rita A. Bascos Sarabia, contains an order dismissing Criminal Case No. 03-2784 (for coup d'etat) against Trillanes, Gary Alejano and James Layug pursuant to Proclamation 75. Another document issued by Judge Elmo Alameda of Makati RTC 150 contains an order dismissing Criminal Case No. 07-3126 against Trillanes and several others, pursuant to Proclamation 75, and canceling the bail bonds posted by the accused for their provisional liberty. How then could the Makati RTC comply with DU30's wishes and file new charges against Trillanes, when it was the one that had dismissed those charges?

Another document signed by Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, AFP Chief of Staff at the time and now DU30's National Security Adviser, certifies that Trillanes, upon filing his certificate of candidacy for the Senate on February 6, 2007, resigned ipso facto from the regular force of the AFP. Not only was he separated from the service, he was also paid his separation benefits from government. How then could the military subject Trillanes to a court martial when the record bears that he was automatically separated from the service when he became a senatorial candidate?

It would appear then that Calida did a very shoddy job in researching the constitutional and factual bases of the proclamation against Trillanes, thereby exposing DU30 to unnecessary embarrassment and ridicule. The evident collapse of his "popularity," even among the ranks of pro-DU30 'fanatics,' will have to be ultimately blamed on this, and nothing else. Therefore, having already identified Calida as the one who provided the sloppy research that led to his issuance of the unconstitutional and factually flawed proclamation, he should now take the next step. He should not try to save Calida, he should do everything to save himself.



Trillanes' goose practically cooked

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Duterte pointed out that Gazmin usurped the power and authority of the President when he himself, not the President, granted these coup plotters amnesty.

It does look like Sen. Antonio Trillanes is headed for jail, city or military, sooner or later as the amnesty documents show that it was not President Aquino who had signed these but his defense chief, Voltaire Gazmin.



FRONTLINE
 Ninez Cacho-Olivares

President Duterte pointed this out the other day, accusing Gazmin of usurpation of authority when he approved Trillanes' application for amnesty.

Duterte insists that Trillanes failed to meet all the requirements necessary for one to be granted amnesty while Trillanes maintains that he had correctly applied for amnesty and admitted guilt.

To prove his point, Trillanes showed media a claimed *pro-forma* application form where there was a box and where the applicant checks on whether he had participated in *coups d'etat* against the government.

But, apparently, this is not sufficient proof that Trillanes had applied for and was quickly granted amnesty by the then Department of National Defense under the yellow regime.

more like an invitation with the usual RSVP on whether to apply or not.

It certainly makes a lot of sense for an applicant to submit a sworn affidavit stating his crime against the Gloria government through *coups d'etat* and not only as a participant but one that instigated the

coups, then admit his guilt in black white and swearing to the truth of his written statement.

This is probably what is absent in Trillanes' amnesty grant and the senator probably knows it which is why he continues to be too cowardly to face the music and keeps waving useless documents that do not prove anything.

Gazmin, however, issued a statement to the effect that Trillanes' and at least 38 other Magdalo soldiers' amnesty grants given eight years ago were aboveboard.

However, Duterte pointed out that Gazmin usurped the power and authority of the President when he himself, not the President, granted these coup plotters amnesty.

The President, who is not only a lawyer but also served as a prosecutor in his early career in Davao City, said the proclamation he issued invalidated only Trillanes' privilege since "it is a presidential prerogative" to choose who gets an amnesty.

"It's the President's prerogative. You read the Philippine Constitution. The President shall have the power to pardon and grant amnesty with the concurrence, with the agreement of Congress," Duterte told reporters at a briefing at the Davao International Airport upon his arrival from Jordan.

It does look like Duterte may have a strong constitutional case, given the proviso on presidential powers on amnesty, which would be very difficult for Trillanes and his

lawyers to argue their case before the Supreme Court and win.

Already, Trillanes and his lawyers appear prepared to destroy the independence of the High Court when they claimed that the ruling of the court on the issue of the amnesty grant to the senator will favor Duterte and his government, which is a pretty stupid claim, especially since the constitutional proviso on the powers of the President not only spells these powers out, but also the failure of Trillanes to issue a sworn affidavit detailing his crime, Duterte said.

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It makes a lot of sense that the so-called application for amnesty shown by Trillanes to the media is just that.

And probably Solicitor General Jose Calida, who had done the research on presidential amnesty grants and found the flaws in the amnesty grant. This is certainly not a crime even if Trillanes tries so hard to make it appear as a crime.

It is also probable that since Trillanes realizes that his goose is practically cooked, rumors—no doubt coming from him and his Magdalos—have swirled that yet another coup is being planned by disgruntled soldiers and over Duterte's revocation of his and other coup participants.

All this talk started from the Trillanes camp is not likely to bear fruit, but if it does bloom into an actual coup, it is bound to fail anyway, especially since no yellow and certainly not Trillanes, or the commies, or the clerics, can hope to be a rallying force to reckon with.

Trillanes is nothing but a propagandist and a bearer of fake news to get him out of a serious scrape of his own making.

It's time for Senate President Tito Sotto to step in and stop the nonsense being generated by Trillanes and the yellows.

Trillanes is just not worth it.

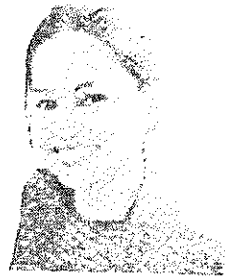
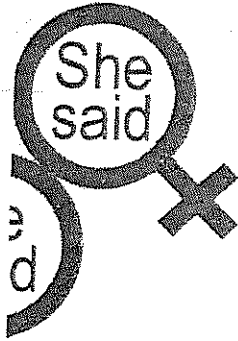


Merely checking a box in a claimed *pro-forma* amnesty document creates the impression that the amnesty granted the rebels holds very little importance, despite giving these same Magdalo rebels not only their complete freedom but also Aquino's erasure of the serious crime.

It makes a lot of sense that the so-called application for amnesty shown by Trillanes to the media is just that and should be treated

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Timing is everything



Dinah S. Ventura

The libel suit against Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV was coincidental, Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra told reporters during a National Police Commission event recently.

The Department of Justice head was commenting on the case filed against the opposition senator by President Rodrigo Duterte's eldest son, ex-Vice Mayor of Davao Paolo Duterte and son-in-law Atty. Manases Carpio.

He said the suit was filed on the anniversary of the time Trillanes made remarks on a radio show that linked the President's son and son-in-law — who filed separate libel cases against the senator — to an extortion allegation.

That case, he stressed, did not have anything to do with the President's proclamation voiding an amnesty granted by former President Noynoy Aquino to the military man-turned-senator.

And, of course, he added he will not meddle with the preliminary investigation of said case. (Which goes without saying, I think, right?)

Timing, they say, is everything.

And timing is making an underdog of whom this administration has tagged as the attack dog of the opposition.

As for a dog cat dog world, this is prime illustration.

Certainly that is how I see it, especially with the latest kick delivered by Labor Undersecretary Jacinto Paras, who

“Timing is making an underdog of whom this administration has tagged as the attack dog of the opposition.”

as of this writing, is set to file a case of “inciting to sedition or inciting to *coup d’etat*” against Trillanes next week.

Paras, a former lawmaker, said he is “making a stand” as a Filipino, never mind if he is in government right now, against someone who is “mocking the government and mocking the President.”

He was referring to Trillanes’ alleged efforts to spark a mutiny against the Commander in Chief and for supposedly calling the latter “insane.”

Trillanes has an overwhelming barrage of attacks to face. His biggest one is the impending arrest following the Solicitor General’s findings that he had not fulfilled two requirements to validate the amnesty granted to him for the *coup d’etat* and rebellion charges filed against him for leading uprisings in 2003 and 2007 when he was still a Navy officer.

However, a *Rappler* report says old documents it had managed to obtain showed the Department of National Defense “certified that Senator Antonio Trillanes IV submitted an application for amnesty, contrary to Maacañang’s claim that he did not.”

The article further stated “the same documents showed he and other ex-mutineers admitted to specific crimes, such as mutiny, in their application.”

Time will tell if these documents will hold water with the courts or whoever will be deciding on this skirmish.

Right now the babel is increasing as words are thrown toward one common target with canine accuracy.

There is Paras who says he is merely doing his duty as citizen, never mind if he had earlier filed charges of grave threats over statements Trillanes allegedly made against him at the sidelines of a Senate inquiry in June.

There are Paolo and Mans, who obviously were angered by the senator during the Senate inquiry into the billion-peso shabu haul that linked their names to the controversy. Pictures tell a story and the expressions in their faces are more revealing than the civilized words they say.

As for Solicitor General Jose Calida, who Trillanes said he had been set on investigating for allegedly questionable contracts before the senator’s arrest order was made — he has done his job well, indeed, leaving the President with “no choice” but to make that proclamation voiding amnesty.

Never mind if it is the Chief Executive’s discretion to grant or revoke amnesty.

Golden chance

Even lawyer friends could not sit down in agreement with President Rodrigo Duterte's voiding of Sen. Antonio Trillanes' amnesty by former President Noyonoy Aquino over his leading role in the 2003 coup against Aquino predecessor Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

One camp said it is convinced with the President's legal team's unearthing of Trillanes' non-compliance with the requisite of his admission of fault. Never mind the application as Trillanes may have submitted one.

The other camp is convinced Trillanes had complied with everything that is necessary to be granted absolute pardon by the previous President.

What they agreed on, however, is the timing of the issuance of Proclamation 572.

The declaration nullified Trillanes' amnesty for his supposed failure to apply for amnesty and admit his guilt for his involvement in two incidents in 2003 and 2007 when he sought the removal of Arroyo when he was still a Navy official.

Trillanes cried corruption in the military that galvanized the Magdalo forces to raise arms against Arroyo.

Those incidents also made Trillanes become a public figure.

Trillanes ran for senator in 2007 and won as a guest candidate under the Genuine Opposition ticket. He campaigned from the Navy stockade where this rubbernecker had the opportunity to interview him once and from where he displayed a strong demeanor which may have helped convince his other coup plotters to follow his cause.

He was freed in December 2010 after more than seven years in detention following various pleas from many fronts, including from former Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, who told this rubbernecker he "had to do it so he (Trillanes) could do his Senate work."

But Trillanes was an Aquino ally. It made sense for Aquino to issue Proclamation Order 75 granting amnesty to the participants of the 2003 Oakwood mutiny, the 2006 failed coup and Marine standoff and the 2007 Manila Peninsula hotel siege.

In January 2011, Trillanes and 94 former junior

“
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It made
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Proclamation
Order 75.”



Aldrin Cardona



military officers and enlisted personnel renewed their oath of allegiance to seal the amnesty they received.

Trillanes won a second term in 2013 elections with more than 13.9 million votes.

But while presents himself as the chief Duterte critic in the Senate, not a few are convinced he had failed to gain enough headway to make them consider Trillanes a political heavyweight.

He was not.

Not until last week when Proclamation 572 gave him free tickets to publicity he may have wanted to get all along.

Lawyer friends I have sat with could not agree less.

But while Trillanes' Senate career is over by the next mid-term elections, his newfound glory being Duterte's target—based on the President's own words—may help him secure a congressional post via the partylist. He may even help his comrade Gary Alejano in switching posts as they have designed their charts if they could have their way.

But it's gonna take a lot of work still.

As Commodore Rex Robles of the Feliciano Commission, which probed the 2003 Oakwood mutiny, said on Friday: "It is up to Trillanes to prove (that he applied and qualified for amnesty) and make the President look stupid. This is his golden chance."

No one lets go of a golden chance. It comes just once, if it does.

Unholy alliance

Sen. Antonio Trillanes' challenge for President Rodrigo Duterte to declare a revolutionary government and for government forces to arrest him without the benefit of a warrant from a court was simply silly.

It was obviously a desperate ploy to stir the sentiments of the soldiers in his misplaced hope they will rise in arms against the government like he and his fellow Magdalo rebels did in the failed 2003 Oakwood and 2007 Manila Peninsula mutinies.

Apparently, Trillanes's bait was also meant as a smokescreen to mask a plot to oust the President.

Unfortunately for the senator, Duterte is not a fool. Besides, he has been getting a stream of information on the real agenda of Trillanes and his cohorts.

Upon his arrival from Jordan and Israel, Duterte bared that Trillanes, the Yellow Army of former President Benigno "Noy" Aquino III and the largely spent communist movement have formed an unholy alliance to topple him by October.

The ties that bind Trillanes and the Yellows are plain to see. It was the former President who granted Trillanes the flawed amnesty. Now, Trillanes has assumed the role of the top attack dog of the Yellows in their bid to undermine the Duterte administration.

It is also obvious that the Yellows have the motive to oust Duterte. If they manage to do so—and that is a big if—the constitutional successor is Vice President Leni Robredo.

There is no denying too that the Reds want Duterte ousted. They have tasted power when Duterte bent backwards and appointed some Left-leaning people in his Cabinet, not to mention his offer to talk peace with the communists.

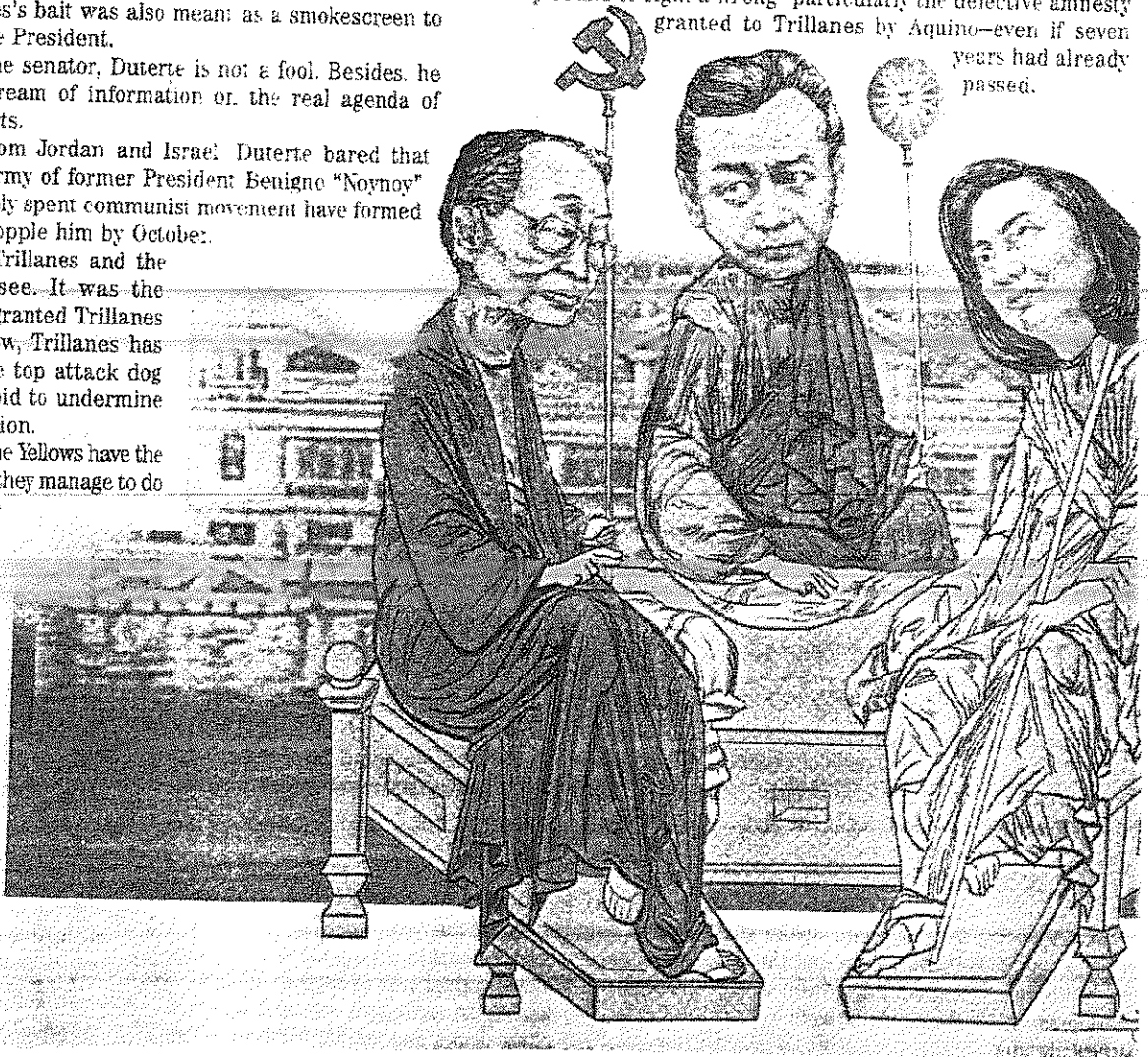
However, the commies got greedy and demanded more concessions from the government.

But Duterte saw what's coming and blunted the

moves of the unholy alliance, first by canceling the peace talks with the communists.

He then revoked the amnesty given to Trillanes for being void *ab initio* and put him on the defensive, cowering inside his office for fear of being arrested anytime.

Duterte noted that his mandate is to implement the laws and he is duty-bound to right a wrong—particularly the defective amnesty granted to Trillanes by Aquino—even if seven years had already passed.



It would amount to dereliction of duty, according to the President, if he would disregard the research finding of the Office of Solicitor General Jose Calida which showed the amnesty of Trillanes was fatally flawed.

While trying to put up a brave face, Trillanes sounds more and more desperate in doing so.

The senator must be very concerned to learn it was Calida who looked at his records under a microscopic scrutiny and discovered he failed to meet at least two requirements of the amnesty.

The first defect was his failure to file a formal application for amnesty while the other was his refusal to admit guilt in connection with his failed attempts to grab power. That Trillanes was given amnesty despite these shortcomings speaks volume about the ties between Aquino and the senator.

Trillanes has a lot of reasons to worry because Calida has proven his legal mettle in his precedent-setting *quo warranto* case that led to the ouster of former Supreme Court Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno.

The senator must be busy looking for the best legal minds who can represent him in his bid to squirm out of the legal difficulties Calida had thrown his way.

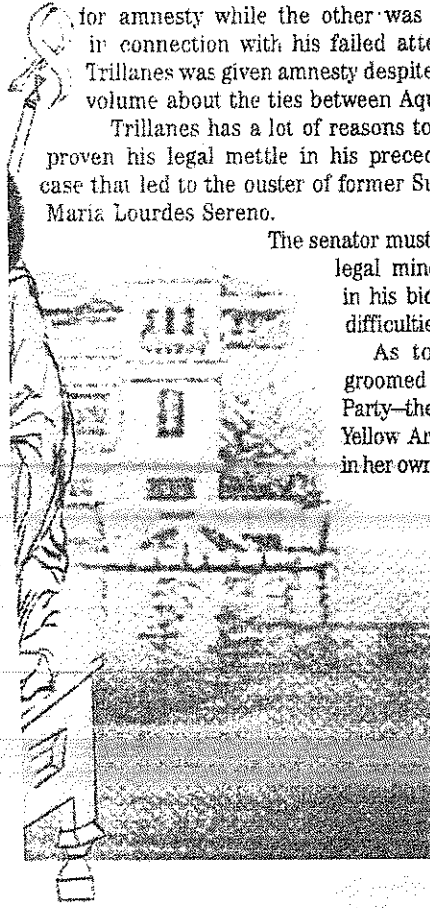
As to Robredo, who is being groomed as the leader of the Liberal Party—the political component of the Yellow Army—she is also bogged down in her own legal problems in the recount of the votes sought by her opponent in 2016, former Sen. Bongbong Marcos.

The last cog in the alliance, the Reds, are now on the retreat and their leader Jose Maria Sison is reduced to the role of making fake health reports on Duterte.

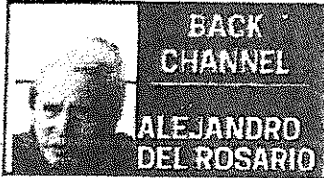
Of course, no matter how bad their situation is, the unholy alliance may still try to proceed with its plans to oust Duterte.

But that is definitely a Hail Mary move.

Concept News Central



Clean waters as food source



BACK
CHANNEL

ALEJANDRO
DEL ROSARIO

RISING food prices and dwindling supply are much talked about these days. Rice, meat and fish are the staple and subject of those who are struggling to bring them to the family table. But let's talk about fish. Like vegetables, fish, as any nutritionist will tell you, is healthier to eat than that fatty pork belly and expensive beef.

The Philippines is a country endowed with rich natural resources. It is an archipelago of 7,107 islands surrounded by bodies of water like the Pacific Ocean on the East and the South China Sea on the

“Protecting the environment is not a priority of this administration.”

West. Both bodies of water are bountiful in marine life, particularly fish. Yet we are importing fish like *galunggong* from nearby countries like China, Vietnam and Taiwan whose poachers ply our waters.

It is under such a dire situation where-in Buhay Party-List Rep. Lito Atienza sounded off on one of his most ardent ad-

vocacies—saving the environment.

“Our seas, river and streams, aside from providing us with safe drinking water, are an abundant source of food. Fish and other edible marine food harvested from our seas can help solve the food scarcity,” said Atienza.

Yet, Atienza said, protecting the environment is not a priority not only under President Duterte but in all previous administrations.

“Instead of protecting and saving the environment as a mission of government, it has been more an omission,” remarked the former Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources. His stint as DENR secretary was short because his appointment was made near the end of former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's nine-year reign.

Turn to A5

Clean...

From A4

“A case in point is the continued deterioration of Manila Bay and Laguna de Bay,” Atienza pointed out. He is saddened that the once-beautiful Manila Bay has become one big receptacle for garbage which washes ashore on Roxas Boulevard whenever there is a storm surge.

Atienza's other observations: While fish like *tilapia*, *bangus* and other species are harvested from Laguna de Bay, these are mainly exported to Japan and even the United States as frozen food for the dollar-rich overseas Filipinos. But very few fish from our oceans reach the Filipino table. Even the lowly *galunggong*'s price has gone up. Sadly, these are fish caught from our own waters by poachers from nearby countries and then reexported to the Philippines.

But resourceful and creative Filipinos know how to bring down the *galunggong*'s retail selling price at the local market. Why do you think that rumor about formalin-tainted *galunggong* spread like wildfire?

A subject that makes the usually mild-mannered Atienza furious is the continued rape of Laguna de Bay. He's angry that only the rich and powerful are the ones benefitting from the fish bounty in the lake as they shipped the fish harvest abroad for dollar revenues. The small and non-export quality catch are the ones that make it to the local market.

What are the other disastrous consequences of those illegal fish pens in Laguna de Bay? Chemical food are fed the fish to make them fatter and heavier to command higher prices. This means more profit. Not all the powdery foodstuff are eaten by the fish and they stay at the bottom of the lake. The result is that the lake

has become shallower to inundate the seaside towns of Laguna. Flood waters in these areas often stay for a month even after it has stopped raining. I know this for a fact as I am from the province of Laguna.

“Laguna de Bay is the largest lake in Asia but it has also become one big fishpen for the rich and powerful,” said Atienza, a former Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources under then-president and now House Speaker Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

He also recalled how he used to catch with his bare hands fish like *dalag* and *hito* and even the *palaka* (frogs) from rice paddies. Pampanga folks cook frogs into delicious palakang adobo. Frogs, *grenouilles* in French, are an expensive delicacy in the menu of expensive restaurants in Paris.

Even our lowly *kuhol* or snails cultured in rice fields are exported to France for the locals and foreign tourists to feast on as escargots.

Duterte blinked

THREE days after President Duterte notified the amnesty granted to Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV by his predecessor President Benigno Aquino III, the institutions that he expected to execute his order blindly and support him did not deliver, forcing him to back-track. Presidential spokesman Harry Roque, in his media briefing in Amman, Jordan last Friday before the presidential party returned to Manila after official visits to Israel and Jordan, announced that the President has decided to abide by the rule of law.

Roque said Duterte convened a Cabinet meeting while he was in Jordan about his order to arrest Trillanes as contained in his Proclamation 572: "Kahapon po, binigyan kong kumpirmasyon na nagkaroon po ng pagpupuon ng Presidente sa lahat po ng Gabinete na sumama sa biyaheng ito. Pinag-usapan po nila kung ano ang magiging posisyon ng administrasyon tungkol po dito sa pag-revoke ng amnesty kay Senator Trillanes. At matapos po ng mahabang talakayan, nagdesisyon ang Presidente that he will abide with the rule of law, aantayin po niya ang desisyon ng hukuman ng Regional Trial Court kung sila

ay mag-i-issuing ng warrant of arrest. So uulitin ko po, desisyon ng Presidente is, he will allow the judicial process to proceed, and he will await the issuance of the appropriate warrant of arrest if there is indeed one to be issued before Senator Trillanes is arrested and apprehended."

Coming from a lawyer we have known to be brilliant, it was painful to the ear.

The President does not choose whether or not he will abide by the rule of law. It is his duty to enforce the law.



HONESTLY SPEAKING

ELLEN TORDESILLAS

The President does not choose whether or not he will abide by the rule of law. It is his duty to enforce the law.

He has sworn to that when he assumed the presidency "to preserve and defend its Constitution, execute its laws, do justice to every man, and consecrate myself to the service of the Nation."

Proclamation 572, signed on Aug. 31 but made public through a paid notice in the Manila Times on Sept. 4 while the President, his Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdia, and several members of his Cabinet were in Israel, declared void ab initio the amnesty granted to Trillanes in 2010 because "there is no available copy

of his application for amnesty in the records" and that the former Navy Officer allegedly did not admit to the charge of coup d'etat for what they did on July 27, 2003 in Oakwood Hotel and in Manila Peninsula on Nov. 29, 2007 when Trillanes and some 300 young officers and soldiers took a stand against corruption in the government and in the alleged election cheating of Gloria Arroyo.

Proclamation 572 ordered "the Armed Forces of the Philippines and Philippine National Police to employ all lawful means to apprehend former LTSG Antonio Trillanes so he can be recommitted to the detention facility where he had been incarcerated for him to stand trial for the crimes he is charged with."

Legal experts were dumbfounded with the stupidity of Proclamation 572.

Foremost issue: The President cannot order an arrest. Only a judge may order an arrest.

Another issue: The military cannot arrest a civilian, which Trillanes is. The military's job is secure the country against external threats.

By Trillanes to be reinstated to the

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DUTERTE

military? As what? LTJG?

Lawyer Vic Verdadero, experienced in court martial proceeding having defended Sen. Gregorio Honasan, Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Danilo Lim and several Scout Rangers implicated in the 2006 standoff, said: "When Sonny filed his COC for senator, he was considered resigned from the service, and that was when he was still incarcerated in Crame. So how could the revocation of the amnesty reinstate him to military service? If ever the revocation of the amnesty is legal, what may be reinstated is the charge of coup d' etat lodged in the civilian court, subject to the limitation of prescription."

Trillanes, who has spent seven years in detention and won his first senatorial mandate while in jail, said he will not hide or run away. But he didn't make it easy for Duterte's forces. He sought the sanctuary of the institution of the Senate. His colleagues, some openly, some personally, supported him.

The House of Representatives, under Speaker Gloria Arroyo, did not issue any statement on Proclamation 572 unlike when it was under ousted speaker Pantaleon Alvarez, who would bark at the snafu of Duterte's fingers.

More importantly, the military didn't move to do the illegal thing of arresting Trillanes. As it is in military practice, they will do as ordered - from a court martial in compliance with Proclamation 572 but mindful that the senator has gone to the Supreme Court to challenge the legality of Duterte's proclamation.

The Department of Justice was not able to obtain an arrest warrant and hold order from the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 14b. The court scheduled a hearing on Sept. 13.

Unfazed or frantic, perhaps, the DOJ went to another court, Makati Branch 150, in what many see as forum shopping.

Meanwhile, Trillanes has shown the public document relevant to his amnesty grant.

Upon his arrival from Jordan last Saturday, Duterte said he issued the proclamation based on the information supplied to him by Solicitor General Jose Calida about an alleged deficiency in Trillanes' amnesty.

The Senate, upon the initiative of Trillanes, is investigating violations of the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees by Calida for the multi-million government contracts obtained by his family-owned security agency.

The scenario that Duterte wanted when he issued Proclamation 572 was for him to return from Israel and Jordan and go straight to jail where Trillanes would have been incarcerated. He would have a heliuva time taunting him.

That didn't happen. He blinked. And his spokesman said he has decided to abide by the law.

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ONLINE NEWS

10 SEPTEMBER 2018

www.inquirer.net

Don't take part in politics, AFP chief tells troops

By: Frances Mangosing - Reporter / @FMangosingINC

INQUIRER.net / 09:13 PM September 09, 2018



Gen. Carlito Galvez (Photo by SN1 DONALD H. VILUAN / AFP Public Affairs Office)

Armed Forces of the Philippines chief Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr. on Sunday warned government troops not to involve themselves in partisan politics following the nullification of the amnesty granted to Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV.

Speaking for the first time after joining President Rodrigo Duterte's official visits to Israel and Jordan, the AFP chief reminded troops to remain faithful to the Constitution, else they would be dealt with accordingly.

"I am nonetheless reminding every soldier, airman, sailor, and marine not to meddle or take part in partisan politics. Our loyalty is to the Constitution. I command the troops to adhere to the rule of law and always obey the Chain of Command," he said in a statement.

"Violation of these instructions will be dealt with severely and personnel who will get involved will be immediately relieve from their post and investigated," he added.

The AFP chief also warned persons and groups "sowing intrigues and discord among its officers and enlisted personnel" amid speculations that there were "rumblings" in the military.

"Let me belie claims by some quarters of divisiveness or rumblings in the AFP. I assure our people that, as in many times in the past, the AFP will be one and undivided as an organization," Galvez said.

"While I am aware that the troops have individual views on many issues, those merely hallmark an intelligent and matured organization like the AFP. But we always put the interest of the organization and the nation above our own," he added.

He also reiterated the military's earlier statement that it would yield to the Supreme Court on Trillanes' petition questioning the proclamation that voided his amnesty.

According to Proclamation No. 572, signed Aug. 31, Trillanes allegedly failed to file an application for amnesty and express admission of guilt for his involvement in two failed mutinies in 2003 and 2007 to protest the alleged corruption during the presidency of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. It also directs the police and military to arrest the senator.

It also cites a military certification saying that there was "no available copy" of the senator's amnesty application from the records of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, J1.

Because Trillanes supposedly failed to comply with the requirements for amnesty application, he will be tried to general court martial (GCM) and he will be returned to military custody.

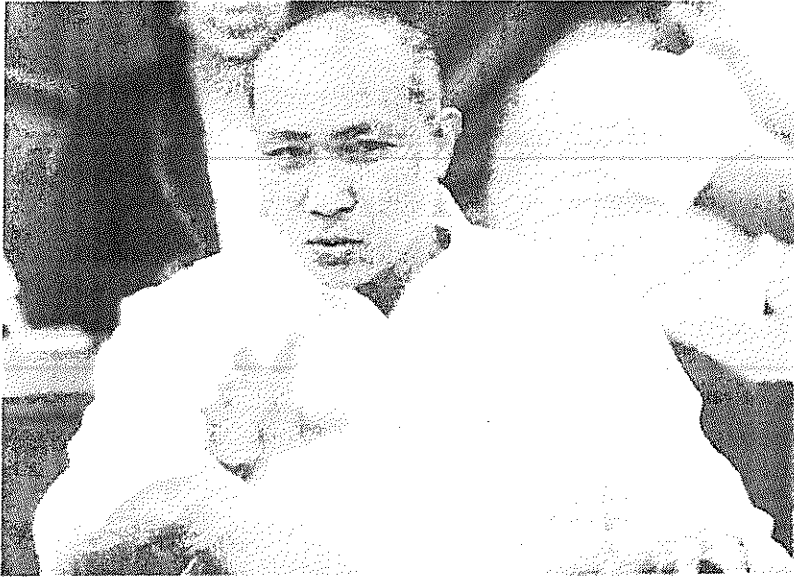
"When the GCM resumes, it shall proceed from where it stopped in its proceedings when Presidential Proclamation 75 was signed. The proceedings, however, will be held in abeyance until the SC has ruled on the merits of PP572," Galvez said. /atm

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Alejano: Duterte supported NPA while still Davao mayor

By: Darryl John Esquerra - @inquirerdotnet

INQUIRER.net / 12:59 PM September 09, 2018



Rep. Gary Alejano. AP FILE PHOTO

Magdalo partylist Rep. Gary Alejano on Sunday turned the tables on President Rodrigo Duterte after the latter accused the opposition and the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) of conniving to oust him from power.

Alejano said it was actually the President who admitted supporting the New People's Army (NPA) when he was still Davao City mayor.

"Sino ba talaga ang nag-alaga, nag-kupkop at nakipagkutsaba sa mga komunista? Hindi ba si Presidente Duterte? Siya. Ano ginawa nya sa Davao? Not only that he is sympathetic but he supported, actually, the New People's Army. Admitted naman n'ya 'yun in public e. Siya dapat ang tinatanong n'yan," Alejano said in an interview over Radyo Inquirer.

The mutineer-turned-lawmaker noted that opposition members were talking but insisted that they subscribe to the rule of law.

"May pag-uusap kami kasama ang Liberal Party dahil opposition kami. 'Di naman namin sinabi na bumaba ka na dyan, patalsikin ka namin. Sinasabi namin we subscribe to the legal process, hindi illegal 'yan," he said.

Referring to the Leftists, Alejano said, "Hindi nga kami tugma sa mga hanay ng mga makakaliwa dahil nga taliwas sa aming katayuan pero sa basic issues, sa karapatang pantao, 'yung pagbigay ng mga benepisyo sa ating kababayan minsan nagsasama sama tayo jan... because it's legitimate grievances."

"Tatlo yan, bantayan ninyo. 'Yang Yellow, Liberal Party, Trillanes, pati ang politburo (communists)," he said.

Citing "intelligence," Duterte said he would divulge his proof in time or when the Supreme Court told him to do so.

"We will show it to you. Kaya kayong mga sundalo before you jump into conclusion, tanungin n'yo intelligence n'yo and they will show you. It's not for public consumption now, pero pagdating ng panahon and I'm compelled by the Supreme Court and say "state your case". ipalabas ko lahat." he added. /cbb

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CPP says Duterte abusing power by ordering arrest of Trillanes

By: Germelina Lacorte - @inquirerdotnet

Inquirer Mindanao / 08:25 PM, September 09, 2018

DAVAO CITY —The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) compared President Rodrigo Duterte to former dictator President Ferdinand Marcos for ordering the arrest of his fiercest critic, the former mutineer-turned-senator Antonio Trillanes IV.

In a statement posted on its website, the CPP also said Duterte was only fomenting “further division and dissent” among key military and police officials,” in ordering Trillanes’s arrest.

“He abused his power and trampled on the legal processes of his own government,” the CPP said.

“His assault against Trillanes satisfies his desire for vengeance, as well as that of Gloria Arroyo’s. By ordering the AFP [Armed Forces of the Philippines] to carry out his order, he has virtually transformed the AFP as his own private army, but in doing so, he has fomented further dissent and divisions among key military and police officials.”

The CPP also described as reprehensible Duterte’s latest order to the police to wage the murderous drug war against the poor and rival drug syndicates and his order to the AFP to drop bombs and rockets against peasant communities and their schools and carry out a total “war against the people” under Oplan Kapayapaan.

“Duterte’s order to imprison Trillanes has further emboldened his rival politicians to oppose his tyranny and has further isolated himself from the Filipino people,” the statement said.

“He has strengthened the determination of broad democratic forces to oust Duterte and his allies in fascism, puppetry and corruption.”

On his arrival here on Saturday from the trip to Israel and Jordan, where he said he had acquired arms, the President said three groups had been plotting to oust him: and he identified those groups as the politburo (political bureau of the) CPP, Trillanes and the yellow Liberals. /atm